

Secret Teachings of PADMASAMBHAVA

ESSENTIAL INSTRUCTIONS ON MASTERING THE ENERGIES OF LIFE

Translated by KENNARD LIPMAN, PHD

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Primordial Experience: An Introduction to rDzogs-chen Meditation

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To my teachers of Tibetan Buddhist wisdom,
Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche and in the memory
of Professor Herbert V. Guenther

Contents

Translator's Preface

THE LATE PROFESSOR H. V. Guenther first introduced me to these texts from the *Innermost Essence of the Dakini (Khadro Nyingtig)*[1] over thirty years ago when I was working on my master's thesis on Buddhist cosmology. The *Treasury of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharmakosha)*, a fifth-century C.E. Indian compendium of Buddhist knowledge, describes the origin of our present world-system from a mandala of wind, which itself originated from the karma of sentient beings of the previous world-system. This wind then condensed into the phases of water, earth, and fire to form the material world.

I wanted to know more about these phases and to what extent this creation story was an integral part of the Buddhist view or merely a tale taken from the general stock of Indian mythology. In the *Khadro Nyingtig* I found what I was looking for and much more. These texts introduced me to deeper and deeper levels of interpretation (five levels in fact, as we shall see) of these phases and the story they were conveying about the nature of our world. Later, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche gave me the transmission of these texts.

I owe these two teachers whatever understanding I may have

gained from the Tibetan tradition, a precious resource for all humanity. From them I learned, however imperfectly, the union of study and practice, well expressed by C. G. Jung:

> The alchemical opus consisted of two parts: the work in the lab, with all its emotional and demonic hazards, and the scientia or theoria, the guiding principle of the opus by which its results were interpreted and given their proper place.[2]

I have included an appendix on H. V. Guenther's approach to translation because many of my translations of technical terms are based on his. A list of technical terms is found in appendix 4 at the back of the book.

More importantly, however, I think it necessary to give some of the reasons behind Guenther's approach to translation. Guenther was unique among the scholars of his generation in the depth of his involvement with the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, not only as a practitioner but also in his commitment to finding contemporary language that would match the sophistication of the original texts. This is a task that every generation must take up, and Guenther can be an excellent guide whether one utilizes his terminology or not.

Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche's translations, which I also use, are very different but also distinctive. He, like Guenther, was unique in his generation of teachers. He spent years in Italy as a professor in Rome and Naples, learning about how he might communicate the teachings before he ever said a word as a Dzogchen master.

I would also like to thank Dr. Steven Goodman for providing me with searchable files of the Seventeen Upadesha Tantras.

May we all find a kind and quiet heart amid the storms of the energies of life.

Introduction

THESE TWO TEACHINGS of Padmasambhava, *The Fivefold Essential Instruction* and *A Section of Hidden Instruction, the Innermost Essence of the Dakini,* are certainly of interest to the serious practitioner of the Vajrayana. They not only present well-known tantric teachings of channels (*tsa*), energy (*lung*), and potencies (*tigle*) in a clear and practical way, but they also offer us a unique Dzogchen perspective on them. In addition, they give us a glimpse into life on retreat with two of the greatest masters of Tibetan Buddhism, Padmasambhava and Yeshe Tsogyal.

But these teachings also offer something to many other people who seek answers to the difficult problems of our time. These teachings attract us with the clarity of their vision and the practicality of their application. They speak to us as human beings who want to know how to master the often-overwhelming energies of life. I certainly found them personally instructive, both as a practitioner of the Vajrayana and of traditional Chinese medicine. In this introduction I will suggest how they may offer us answers to three basic questions:

1. What is a holistic world-view?

2. What is human energy (qi/*prana*/*lung*) and how do we master it?
3. What is the place of sexuality in the mastery of human energy for healing and enlightenment?

What Is a Holistic World-View?

The environmental challenges of our time demand a holistic view of nature and life. In terms of our texts, "holistic" means a view of life that includes all of its levels: external, physical reality; internal, psychic reality; and increasingly more subtle, esoteric levels. "Holistic" also means an understanding of how these levels function together in a practical way accessible to the practitioner. We live in an impressive and complicated technological civilization. Our abilities to understand and alter the natural world, including ourselves, are both wondrous and scary. Neither subatomic particles nor the global ecosystem are beyond our grasp. But given all this impressive scientific knowledge, what understanding of nature do I have that I can directly apply in my life? Or some may ask: how do I live a more natural life?

Whether we consciously reflect on it or not, we are applying a view of nature when we go to a doctor or adopt the latest dietary recommendations. But those are still rather passive applications of the scientific view of nature. Perhaps if we are active in following a regimen of treatment prescribed by our doctor, we might get an inkling of what it is to apply a view of nature to our life. Most of us are not scientists, even though we may appreciate the scientific view of nature and what it can understand about life. Most of us, however, do want a view of life that is more, well, lively, than

what we can glean from the latest scientific information. We have myriad questions, some just passing thoughts, others more sustained inquiries, about the natural things we do every day: What and how much should I eat and drink? How can I improve my sleep and how much should I sleep? What can I do about my lack of energy in the afternoon? How much and what kind of exercise do I need? How does prayer aid healing? What effect is anger having on my whole system? What about this feng shui business? and so forth. Usually a more lively view is something that involves a search for something holistic.

What is holistic? Holism comes from a worldview, which in traditional wisdom teachings consists of metaphysics, cosmology, and psychology. These create an invisible landscape in which the practitioner lives. Metaphysics defines what reality is and thus what is really true and valuable, and the true and the valuable define what our purpose in life ought to be. Based on this metaphysics, cosmology tells us how the world comes to be as it is and its general features. Based on this cosmology, psychology explains what/who the human being is and what practices of healing/integration we need to perform to realign ourselves with the cosmos.

The metaphysics of these texts is nonduality. This means that the energies that drive us astray into attachment, aversion, and delusion still remain the expression of primordial wisdom in operation. The cosmology is that the elemental forces that make up our physical body and world are part of the magical apparition of samsara. The elements still remain, however, the expression of primordial forces that have never been split into matter and mind. They are the magical apparition of innumerable buddha-fields

that pervade our body like light. (For an introduction to Buddhist cosmology, see appendix 1.) The psychology consists of special methods for the realization of our body as a buddha-field in this very life, without renouncing the physical world. All this is found here in a usable form for the initiate, but these teachings also show all of us that a practical, integrated view of reality is still possible in our fragmented, postmodern age.

What Is Human Energy (qi/motility/*lung*)?

How do we master our energy for healing and enlightenment? How do we find a middle way between ascetic denial and destructive excess?

These texts reveal to us that what energy is depends on the level of development of an individual. Initially energy is something belonging to the body that we "have." As one progresses, one goes beyond this possessive view of the body. One realizes that energy and mind are not separate. Sensing, feeling, and knowing are energetic phenomena. At bottom, energy is intelligent.

In the modern context, C. G. Jung has pointed the way to experiencing this understanding of energy:

> Archetypes are, at the same time, both images and emotions. One can speak of an archetype only when these two aspects are simultaneous.
>
> When there is merely the image, then there is simply a word picture of little consequence. But by being charged with emotion, the image gains numinosity (or psychic en-

> ergy); it becomes dynamic, and consequences of some kind must flow from it.[1]

In the practice of tantric yoga, focused sensing can guide and control biological energy; archetypal visualization can channel emotional energy; and pure presence can unify energy and mind into a knowing beyond intellect.

We can all train our energy to be more intelligent and our mind to be more grounded in energy. This is the key, even if we are not masters of Vajrayana on extended retreat, to finding a balance between ascetic denial and destructive excess. This is the way to truly enjoy life without compulsive inhibition or attachment.

What Is the Place of Sexuality in the Mastery of Human Energy for Healing and Enlightenment?

Sexuality is human energy par excellence. It is a special opportunity for enlightenment. It is when we are naturally, most effortlessly, fully embodied. It epitomizes a natural oscillation of human energy between earth and heaven, of ascent and descent, between the base of the trunk of the body and the crown of the head. This bio-energetic oscillation is basic to all life, to all our experiences, whether they are sense perceptions, emotions, thinking, or sex. These texts teach us that the key to both relative and ultimate happiness is a kind of relaxed tension, what one contemporary psychological researcher calls "calm energy."[2]

If there is too much tension, the polarity producing energy breaks prematurely. If there is not enough, energy cannot develop. In sexuality there is the dance between separation and union,

fire and water. Separation and difference make for excitement, but too much of it makes for sex without love, power dramas of dominance and submission, and the fire of passion without the wisdom of appreciating one's partner. On the other hand, lack of separation leads to loss of excitement, lack of energy, and the missed opportunity to experience union at higher and deeper levels.[3] Experiencing the energizing flow of separation and union enables us to find a balance between ascetic denial and destructive excess, to truly enjoy life without compulsive inhibition or attachment.

As our texts make clear, the same flow can be realized with or without a sexual partner. Sexual practice is only a special method. As *The Fivefold Essential Instruction* says:

> At the time of intercourse, passionate attachment and the concepts associated with it arise: this is experienced as the creative energy of pristine awareness. If one does not know this, it is just attachment.

Our texts also help us to understand the place of technique in sexual practices. There will always be interest in esoteric or secret techniques, but technique must take us beyond the realm of manipulation and control. As we said above, initially energy is something belonging to the body that we have. Such energy can seemingly be controlled and manipulated, but if we really wish to find buddhahood in this very body, we must go beyond such control, manipulation, and possession. Padmasambhava directly discusses this transcendence of technique when he discusses methods of drawing sexual energy upward:

> One returns the active aspect of the energy thus retained upward and scatters it through the eyes. Some claim that the energy is returned upward through the contributory condition of a means of concentration such as the pupils. This is not so. The unique controlling point is the utilization of the active aspect of energy and mind together; doing this one stores the active energy within. At the time of retaining the active energy, relax the mind in a state beyond concepts. In this way holding and scattering can happen at the same time. This is very profound.

The key point is to "relax the mind in a state beyond concepts." This is not a technique; it is the understanding of Dzogchen. The profoundest view is the best technique. That is the teaching of Dzogchen, in which view, practice, and result are one. (For a discussion of the application of the Dzogchen view to yogic practice, see chapter 5.)

The Relevance of these Teachings to Our Time

We need such esoteric guidance at this time. Humanity will need all its assets to meet the challenge of globalization. Global warming is the negative teaching of the oneness of our world. Only holistic understanding, practice, and realization will save us. We need holistic teachings that are both profound and practical. These texts possess those qualities and need to be studied along with comparable teachings from other wisdom traditions.

The greater the darkness, the greater the potential light. Many traditions speak of the revelation of deep teachings at times of

great outer and inner crisis. In any case, the secrets are already out there in the marketplace. But just because the secrets are out does not mean they can be applied indiscriminately. We should not disregard the importance of view in regard to these teachings. As Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey has said in regard to tantric teachings:

> If one is deficient in these three aspects, renunciation [of samsara], bodhicitta [commitment to enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings], and realistic view [emptiness], which are found in Buddhist tantra, and [if one] engages, for example, in the vaselike meditation on the retention of breath, it has no more significance than the bellows used for a fire; and even if one is engaging in a very elaborate practice of the stage of generation, it has no more significance than walking around a temple and looking at all the pictures.[4]

View helps ensure that one's motivation is healthy in approaching esoteric or secret subjects. The Dzogchen view of the world found in our texts is nonduality. It is summed up beautifully in *A Section of Hidden Instruction, the Innermost Essence of the Dakini,* which describes the phenomena of our world as follows:

> These are not born or manufactured. Although they arise from the motivating cause of going astray due to a lack of pure presence, they remain the functioning of spontaneously self-originating pristine awareness.

The Historical Origin of the Texts

These texts are found in the fourteenth-century collection of Upadesha teachings compiled by Longchenpa (1308–1363), the *Four Collections of Innermost Essence* (*Nyingtig Yazhi*). They are attributed to Padmasambhava, probably coming to Longchenpa through the "treasures" (terma) of Padma Lendreltsel (end of the thirteenth century). The *Khadro Nyingtig* itself tells the story of the origin of these teachings.[5] The story concerns the great king Tri Songdetsen's daughter, who apparently died at the age of eight and was brought back to life by Padmasambhava. After she revives, the guru teaches her the *Khadro Nyingtig* and she is eventually reborn as Padma Lendrelstsel.

To try and date these teachings raises all the issues that surround separating fact from later embellishment in the life of Padmasambhava. Between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, a wealth of treasures were brought forth that were said to have been concealed throughout Tibet, and these treasures established Padmasambhava as a kind of patron saint of Tibet. In this literature, Padmasambhava is a central figure who brought Buddhism to Tibet during its imperial age, especially the founding of Samye Monastery in about 779 C.E. The narrative states that the Indian sage Shantarakshita was invited first, but after he encountered resistance, Padmasambhava was invited to dispel the negative forces that opposed the establishment of Buddhism as the national religion. One must remember that Tibet was a great power in central Asia at this time, having even occupied the capital of the Tang dynasty in 763 C.E. The struggle to bring in a new religion must have been considerable, and thus it has become the source of many chronicles and legends.

Some of the oldest information about Padmasambhava is found in one of the earliest chronicles of Tibetan history, the *Testament of Ba*, of which R. A. Stein says, expressing the scholarly consensus:

> It is a relatively ancient, novelized narrative of the eighth century. It has been obviously manipulated, but contains historical elements verified by independent and ancient sources.[6]

Based on the *Testament of Ba* and other early sources, such as the tenth-century Dunhuang documents, Matthew Kapstein gives a fair conjecture about the historical Padmasambhava:

> Padmasambhava was a charismatic tantric master with a following in Nepal and a growing group of disciples in southern Tibet, . . . in the early legends of Padmasambhava we may perhaps discern the recollection of a popular eighth-century guru who met with a king, rather like those among contemporary Buddhist teachers who have attracted large followings and on one occasion or other have met with leading political figures. From this perspective it becomes possible to imagine that the several lineages of lay tantric practitioners that during the late tenth and early eleventh centuries traced their antecedents back to Padmasambhava . . . would have laid great stress upon the royal meeting, whatever the facts of the matter may have been.[7]

Whatever the historical origins of these texts may have been, this does not detract from their vision and power. To think that

historical analysis diminishes the authenticity of traditional teachings is to commit the "fallacy of origins," the belief that the origin of a cultural phenomenon forever limits its meaning and importance.

PART ONE
The Translations

1

THE MEANING OF *The Fivefold Essential Instruction*

THE FIVEFOLD ESSENTIAL INSTRUCTION shows how the five elemental phases of earth, wind, fire, water, and space operate at deeper and deeper levels of reality.

At the outer level, which is the first of the five levels of understanding, the natural environment that we experience consists of five phases of earth, water, fire, wind, and space. These emanate from the primordial ground of being as a "spontaneous glimmering in five hues," but are collectively experienced as five physical phases through a process of concretization. "Concretization" refers to the process of moving from a spiritual to a physical reality. The inner level shows how living beings of the six realms of samsara originate from the "active aspect" of the phases. Their mutual functioning produces life-sustaining processes such as the change of seasons and the growth of plants. On the hidden level, the functioning of the five phases is used to explain the ordinary experience of living beings in samsara, including their growth and aging.

The more hidden level takes us into the tantric understanding of the body and how to put this understanding into practice. Each phase has two aspects. One is our ordinary experience of the body

and its interactions with mind and behavior. Another is a spontaneous presence, like a radiant hue, that transcends the dichotomy between material and spiritual. This presence, and its subtle gradations, is referred to with terms such as the "creative potency," "pristine awareness," and "active energy" of the phases.

The more hidden level discusses how this creative potency can be accessed to both maintain vitality and experience enlightenment through the body. There are two ways to do this: one, by increasing the creative potency naturally; and two, by increasing the creative potency using a suitable partner.

The first is done by oneself. The phases and their creative potency cycle through the chakras in the course of a lunar month, and visualizing these energy centers at the appropriate times can increase their power. While the moon is waxing, these subtle energies rise from the chakra at the sex organs to the crown chakra; with the waning moon, they expand downward again. For example, at the navel chakra one visualizes (by the fourth day of the month) *daka*s and *dakini*s of the Lotus family radiating the light-energy of the five phases through all energetic pathways of the body.[1] In this way the functioning of the phases is harmonized, health is maintained, and the various aspects of pure awareness are experienced. The tantric ritual calendar of new moon, full moon, *dakini* practices, and so on, is based on this subtle movement.

The second method, utilizing a sexual partner, increases the efficacy of these visualizations. While some techniques associated with tantric sexual practice are discussed, so is the importance of going beyond technique, as we mentioned above. Here Padmasambhava also injects a rare personal statement, indicating that there is room for further investigation in the experiential realm of tantric practice: "If there are some errors in the wording here,

intelligent people ought to investigate them. By this instruction may the path of passion be learned and the active energy of one's phases increased and protected."

The fifth level and final section of our text is a kind of addendum, for it shows how to heal various kinds of illnesses caused by the imbalance of the phases, and their interactions with thought and behavior. This was especially important practical advice for someone on retreat for an extended period of time in a remote location. The colophon states: "I, Padma of Urgyen, have composed this in the cave on top of Rust Mountain. Without spreading it everywhere, I make it an experience for myself."

2

TRANSLATION OF *The Fivefold Essential Instruction*

HOMAGE TO THE *dakinis* of the five families! I, Padma of Urgyen, shall give this essential oral instruction on the *dakini*.

I. THE OUTER LEVEL

First, the five external phases are earth, the process that creates solidity; water, the process that creates cohesion; fire, the process that creates temperature; wind, the process that creates movement; and space, the process that creates an open dimension. What is the cause of these five phases? First, space, which has been an open dimension since the beginningless beginning, and pristine awareness, are indivisible.[1] Pristine awareness denotes that aspect within the discerning capacity of the mind that has been there since the very beginning. In space, the intrinsic illuminating quality of pristine awareness is present as a spontaneous glimmering in five hues. Since no good or evil can be found in these, it is called primordially pure. Since it is primordial, it is called naturally complete.

In this above-mentioned pristine awareness, samsara and nirvana cannot be found. If neither of these exists from the very

beginning, it is meaningless to claim that pristine awareness comes about now as a result attained. Fire does not appear as something new when one puts a torch very briefly in water, and it continues to burn after taking it out again. Therefore, since going astray exists as pristine awareness from the very beginning, in the end, when going astray has been swept away, this is the essence of buddhahood.

The reason the five external phases come about is as follows: first, in the open dimension that is without a beginning, five hues arise through the presence of the creative energy of pristine awareness. Because an uninterrupted pure presence exists within this, the concretization of these five hues can come about.[2] This activity of concretization is called wind. In reality, it is the creative energy of pure presence. Within this creative energy, the illuminating quality of pristine discriminating awareness is red, and by going astray into reification, the red of the fire phase arises.[3] The metabolic capacity of the creative energy of pure presence can arise as the movement of this phase. The pristine awareness of fundamental sameness radiates as a yellow hue, and when this is reified the earth phase arises. Then pristine mirrorlike awareness arises as a white hue, and because this is reified, the water phase comes about. The pristine awareness related to activity radiates as a green hue, and because this is reified, the phase of wind arises. The phase of space remains the same as pristine awareness from the very beginning, and fundamentally does not undergo transformation.

Since these hues, which are the intrinsic illumining quality of pristine awareness, are concretized into a "this," the phases of earth, water, fire, and wind arise. "Wind" refers to the fact that these are pervaded with the creative energy of pure presence. Because the four phases are pervaded with wind, wind produces

the wind's power of lifting; fire's powers of heat and burning; water's powers of wetness and coolness; and earth's powers of hardness and the ability to provide support. When the five forms of pristine awareness are reified, the five phases are established as substances, and because they are fundamentally moved by the creative energy of pure presence, the creative energy of the phases comes about.

By the combination of these phases, the environment of the perishable world-system arises. It originates as follows: when the open dimension, which has been there from the very beginning, is reified, the mandala of wind originates; on this water originates; and on this, earth. Fire is the creative energy of wind, and it pervades the other three.[4] This is the way the external phases come about.

II. The Inner Level

Now, the way sentient beings, who are the inner life of the world,[5] originate, is as follows: in the center of the double-*vajra*-shaped wind mandala, a slight warmth arises through the creative energy of pristine awareness. Because this heats up the water phase, vapor rises like smoke through a hole, and that vapor heats up the earth phase. Therefore heat pervades all these phases.

From the active aspect of the four phases, and from being mixed with the hues intrinsic to pristine awareness, three condensation spots of light appear.[6]

The gods, although they have no essence, arise from the first light. The four divisions of the realm of formlessness arise out of rays of this light. From this, the seventeen states of the realm of form originate out of the creative energy of pure presence when

its own movement is reified. Then further reifying this movement leads to the arising of the twenty states of the realm of the sensuous. Thus, although pristine awareness has always been present, innumerable sentient beings of the six life-forms arise due to a lack of pure presence.[7] This state of samsara, into which one has gone astray through lack of pure presence, itself neither increases nor decreases. Since sentient beings, who are the inner life of the universe, come about from the active aspect of the energy of the phases, they are called sentient beings who are the inner life of the universe.

From the second light, the sun and moon come about. First of all, they exist in space because they come about from the active energy of the five phases and the luminosity of space. They are able to shine on everything because they are the creative energy of pristine awareness. They possess heat because they originate from the active energy of fire. Further, the sun is hot because it is the primary instance of the active energy of fire; the moon is cool because it is the primary instance of the active energy of water. The creative energy of these two makes them shine like the light from many stars.

The phases are produced one by one and mutually assist one another in their functioning. Further, when the phases are producing each other one by one, as when they mutually assist one another in the spring, their activity is increasing. Therefore daytime is longer and it is warmer. When the active aspects of the phases are equal, day and night are equal. When the phases are not equal, night is shorter because the power of one has increased slightly. When the phases then gradually act to restrain each other, their activity declines and days get shorter and cooler. The sun goes down because, at a certain time, the phases are dispersed;

and then, having been reorganized by wind, they operate just as before. The changes of the moon and the stars are the same.

Further, because warmth arises from the center of the double-*vajra* of the wind phase, it heats up the water phase. The vapor that arises from the water heats and pervades the earth phase. Heat arises by its own power through the active energy of the fire phase; for example, strongly rubbing two sticks together produces heat, which is like fire arising. The heat-pervaded vapor of the earth forms fog by rising into the sky. Rain comes from the condensation of the fog, like the formation of curds or the dew formed on the cover of a pot. In this way the five phases are generated one by one.

Because they mutually assist one another, the increasing activity of the phases makes the sprouts, leaves, flowers, and fruits of all the trees, grasses, and fruit trees grow. In autumn, all the fruits ripen when the creative energy of the phases is reduced. When the functioning of the phases is low, they begin to mutually restrain one another.[8]

Because the sap and so on gradually descends, the trees, grasses, and fruits dry up, and all sentient beings decline and darken. In the winter all the sap and so on is low and in decline, and the active energies of the phases mutually extinguish each other. From then on the phases become stronger, and one by one produce each other as above. Thus we have explained the way in which sentient beings, who are the internal life of the universe, originate.

III. The Hidden Level

Now we shall explain the hidden level. All the happiness and frustration of samsara and nirvana are produced by the five causal cre-

ative-potencies that are the very essence of the active aspect of the phases.[9] This is just like the case in which the flesh, blood, warmth, breath, and mental activity belonging to the body are produced and nourished with the energy of fruits, flowers, and grasses that are the active aspect of the phases.

Although pristine awareness exists within us from the very beginning, we don't recognize it. Therefore, by latching onto concepts of affirmation and negation regarding the creative energy of pristine awareness, there is the split into samsara and nirvana. One enters into the mother's womb by lack of pure presence. Then, by the combination of the causal creative-potencies of the parents and the pristine awareness that belongs to pure presence, the body is formed.

Further, the body is born with the mutual assistance of the five phases. When one eats food, it is digested by the fire phase; its active and residual parts are separated by the wind phase; it is synthesized by the water phase; and it is hardened by the earth phase. This produces the strength of the body. The active part pervades all the energetic pathways of the body.

Further, this active part increases from birth, and the creative energy operates harmoniously until men and women are thirty years old; this is because the five phases are assisting one another. In this way the active energy settles in the bodily constitution. The coarse aspect of this creative energy, together with the natural radiance of pure presence, establishes the beauty, corpulence, and level of activity of the body. From age thirty to forty the active energy maintains itself, but from then on the five phases mutually restrain one another. The bodily oils become hardened and therefore the active aspect dries up. All the organ functions become impaired and one declines and ages. The span of life is

established because the phases have become disturbed in their functioning. Therefore it is very important to work with the energy of the phases when one is young. This is the way in which the body functions on the hidden level.

IV. Working with the More Hidden Level

The more hidden level is worked with in the following way: the happiness and frustration of all the interdependent relations of nirvana and samsara are produced by the causal creative-potencies.[10] Therefore these causal potencies are the very essence of the active energy of the phases. Because the causal creative-potencies are the basis of the existence of the creative potency of pristine awareness, it is very important to increase them and not impair them.

Now, as to increasing them, there is the natural process of increase, and there is the increase that occurs by relying on a partner as a special condition. In both these circumstances, it is necessary to have the essential controlling point or method:[11] if one does not, internal and external obstacles can arise.

Increasing the Creative Potency without a Sexual Partner

First, the natural process of increase is as follows: the causal creative potency, which is the active aspect of the phases, gradually increases from the first day of the lunar month.[12] At this time, it expands into the constitution from the energetic configuration at the sex organs.[13] So then one should visualize the *dakini* of the Karma family in sexual embrace,[14] symbolic of the active aspect of the phases, within the nexus at the center of the energetic configuration at the sex organs, known as the pleasure-maintaining energetic configuration. Pleasing and beautiful ornaments indicative of the full richness of being

ornament the *dakini.* From the point of sexual union, the five colors of the active aspect of the phases each radiate uninterruptedly. This radiation fills the nexus of that energetic configuration, and from there pervades all the energetic pathways of the body. This fills the whole body with the creative potency of the pure and total presence generated by innumerable such *dakini*s in sexual embrace. One should imagine this as unwavering pleasure. One should also imagine such pleasure arising from all the *daka*s in sexual union, filling the body like a jar full of seeds, while also imagining that their creative potency of pure and total presence fills each of the pores of the body.

By doing this, the phases are harmonized and illness cannot arise. The expansion of their active aspect gives rise to meditative experience of the unity of pleasure and emptiness,[15] the completion of countless accumulations of merit, a good constitution, enjoyments, healthy old age, the energizing power of *daka*s and *dakini*s, as well as the mundane and supreme accomplishments. Thus one ought to meditate.

Next the active aspect increases upward, expanding to the navel by the fourth day of the month. One should imagine the *daka*s and *dakini*s of the Lotus family at the nexus of the energetic configuration of the navel. As of the eighth day, one should imagine the *daka*s and *dakini*s of the Buddha family at the heart. As of the twelfth day, one should imagine the *daka*s and *dakini*s of the Jewel family at the throat. As of the fifteenth of the month, the energy expands to the crown of the head and so one imagines the *daka*s and *dakini*s of the Vajra family at the nexus of the energetic configuration there. The visualization is as above.

Because the phases are expanding upward to the crown, whatever merits one accumulates are increased, and for this reason one shouldn't apply bleeding or burning treatments there. While

experiences may increase or decrease, because one's capacities, senses, and *bodhicitta,*[16] which ought not to be eliminated, are expanding, one can massage a shaved place at the crown of one's head with a mixture of sesame oil, sandalwood, and musk. Thus the phases of the body won't be in conflict, and illness won't arise. If one does not do this, the active aspect of the phases will be disturbed and won't expand to the crown of the head; because the phases won't be in harmony, disease can arise.

Then after this, the active aspect of the phases expands downward. By the nineteenth of the lunar month, it has expanded to the throat; by the twenty-second to the heart; by the twenty-fifth to the navel; by the twenty-eighth to the sex organs; and by the thirtieth to the soles of the feet. At these times one should proceed as above. One can apply a mixture of various oils, honey, and nutmeg to the soles of the feet, as well as warm them in the sun. Thus the phases won't be disturbed and one won't fall ill. Through the growing of the phases, the positive will increase. Through the increase of the active aspect of the phases, experiences of the unity of pleasure and emptiness will arise and one will make oneself fit to practice with a partner. Based on this natural process of increase of the active aspect of the phases, one can add the secondary ingredient of such an objective support.[17]

Increasing the Creative Potency Using a Suitable Partner

Second, the explanation on how to increase the active aspect of the phases by relying on a suitable partner as a special condition has two parts: (1) learning through establishing one's ability to work with one's energy, and (2) learning according to the path of passion itself.[18] Here the path of passion itself will be learned.

First, one must meet with a suitable partner who has the esoteric

empowerment and imagines themselves as a deity,[19] so that at the time of intercourse when passionate attachment and the concepts associated with it arise, this is experienced as the creative energy of pristine awareness. (For a Dzogchen perspective on empowerment, see part 2, chapter 5.) If one does not know this, it is just attachment. Transforming this into pristine awareness means that by working with passionate attachment itself, passionate attachment is purified.

When one first thinks of uniting with the partner,[20] the bodily fluids that arise are the movement of the motile energy of the water phase. Water itself is the female polarity of buddhahood known as Mamaki.[21] Next, one should find the energetic point of arousal of the partner and awaken it. Sometimes one can massage one's partner with honey and beer.

When one moves the sex organs, there is enjoyment and warmth. This heat is the fire phase, which is the female polarity of buddhahood, Pandaravasini. Her pristine awareness is that of supreme enjoyment. The hardening of the sex organs produces pleasure; this hardness is the earth phase, which is the female pole of buddhahood, Buddhalocana. The movements and positions of the body also produce pleasure; this movement is the wind phase and the female aspect of buddhahood, Samayatara.

When one moves and this pleasure arises, one should visualize as above at the nexuses of the five energetic configurations, arousing pleasure and proceeding as before. By doing this, the active energy of the crown flows down, generating the pristine awareness of enjoyment at the throat; the pristine awareness of supreme enjoyment at the heart; the pristine awareness beyond enjoyment at the navel; and the pristine awareness that in its very arising is primordially pure, at the sex organs. The active energies move

within the energetic pathways, mutually assisting one another, thus giving rise to innumerable enjoyments.

When one's creative potency extends down to the navel with the accompanying pleasure, it is necessary to return it upward. One can say HIK three times, imagine it going back up, roll the eyes upward, apply the hold of pulling up from below and pressing down from above, touch the tongue to the palate, contract the toes, press the thumb with the ring finger, press the two middle fingers together firmly, and direct one's awareness to the crown of the head. In this way it is impossible not to retain one's creative potency. Then one can generate pleasure again, and if one cannot retain it in this way one can press the point four finger-widths from the base of the sex organ with one's right ring-finger. Thus there will be no outflow even though the creative potency is completely in the sex organs.[22]

One returns the active aspect of the energy thus retained upward and scatters it through the eyes. Some claim that the energy is returned upward through the contributory condition of an object of concentration, such as the pupils. This is not so. The unique controlling point is the utilization of the active aspect of energy and mind together; doing this, one stores the active energy within. At the time of retaining the active energy, relax the mind in a state beyond concepts. In this way, holding and scattering can happen at the same time. This is very profound. (See introduction, p. 7.)

In general there are sixteen aspects of creative potency.[23] There are eight forms that are returned upward from the sex organs even though there is no action of holding. These are known as the active aspect that generates the bodily constituents and life energy. Therefore until one dies, they remain in the body. At the time of death they do not remain and there is death. There are two forms that are the residual part of the creative potency: that which is not returned

upward even when one tries to return it upward, and that which is not retained even when one tries to retain it. These are the sexual fluids that are generated at the time of passionate attachment. It is like cow's saliva: there is no benefit or harm in it whatsoever.

There are six aspects of creative potency to be retained in the practice of passion. There is an active aspect and a residual aspect; these are the white aspect that concretely arises. Within the white aspect there are six forms that are like small greenish seeds the size of the pupil of an eye. These are the seeds for generating a *tulku*. The creative potency of the mother is like a *laksha* flower, small and oily, and when it predominates a boy is conceived.[24] The white residual aspect of the active energy is what comes out of the vagina.

Practitioners ought to retain all of the active aspect, but because these six seedlike forms of the active aspect of the active energy may not be retained in one's practice, it is necessary to make a special effort to retain all of them. All of a human being's highest capacities come from these six seedlike forms. The white residual aspect of the active energy merely produces the fleshy parts of the body.

The causal creative potency, which is the active aspect of the four phases, is present within all the definable and indefinable pathways of energy radiating from the five energetic configurations through the special condition of contact with a sexual partner. This gives rise to pleasure. The active aspect of the four phases is the creative activity of the movement of pristine awareness inherent in pure presence. This movement is all-pervasive. By making the phases mutually support one another, the creative potency gradually moves to the energetic configurations from the brain. When it arrives at the sex organs, pleasure subsides and the

phases are harmonized. At this time, when one uses a visualized object to retain and return the creative potency, it coils up into a form at the place of one's visualization.

If one does not harmonize the active aspect of the energy of the four phases, illness arises. Therefore, as long as the potency has not reached the sex organs from the brain and right-hand pathway,[25] one should visualize the five energetic configurations as above. This harmonizes the power of the phases, increases their active energy, and prevents illness from arising. By relaxing the mind in a state beyond concepts and bringing the creative potency to the sex organs, the creative potency will go to its natural place.

Therefore the highest capacities will be found within this great pleasure. This pleasure is immeasurable, and it will increase the active aspect of energy. Stable and pure states of concentration will arise, and through these states the joyous, pristine awareness of contemplation will also arise. The active energy will gradually fill the four energetic configurations,[26] and one will realize various common accomplishments, such as the eight great *siddhi*s (Sanskrit).[27] The supreme accomplishment of contemplation that unites pleasure and emptiness will arise, and when one teaches the six realms of sentient beings, the highest capacities of buddhahood will be complete. Pristine awareness will be stabilized. The impure dimension will fade into buddhahood.

If there are some errors in the wording here, intelligent people ought to investigate them. With this instruction, may the path of passion be learned and the active energy of one's phases increased and protected. This is the instruction on experiencing the more hidden level.

V. The Final Stage: How to Heal Illnesses by Harmonizing the Phases

Now the explanation of working on the final stage: illness comes about in our body, which is produced from the active aspect of the four phases, as follows.[28] The causal creative-potency of the components of the body is mixed with the active energy of the phases and is found in each. Therefore these are completely pervaded with movement, which can be shown to produce illness through the six contributory conditions.[29]

When passionate attachment is the contributory condition, warm disease arises. Because the power of fire and wind increase when this warmth arises, the phases are disturbed and there is illness. Further, when anger and unhappiness act as a motivating cause, wind arises, thereby increasing their power. Once again, the phases are disturbed and there is illness. Dullness acting as a motivating cause generates phlegm and cold. This increases the power of the water phase, disturbing the balance of the phases, and disease results. Illness comes about whenever the disharmony becomes great enough. Whenever the functioning of one of the three primary constituents is low,[30] one falls ill; whenever two are low or high, one falls ill. When they are neither high nor low but equal, illness cannot come about.

There is no human being who does not have a greater or lesser predominance of a phase. Sleeping during the day generally acts as a contributory condition for illness. Therefore if a person with a predominance of wind falls asleep during the day, they get a wind illness. Further, the wind can be combined with either heat

or cold. If a person with a predominance of earth sleeps during the day, they generate phlegm, which can in turn be associated with heat or cold disease. If a person with a predominance of water sleeps during the day, they can get a cold disease, which can in turn be associated with a warm or cold illness. If a person with a predominance of fire sleeps during the day, they generate heat, which can in turn be associated with a warm or cold illness. Therefore sleeping during the day increases the power of the active energy of whatever phase is predominant. When the phases are disharmonized, they begin to oppose one another. The disturbing phase produces the illness that is characterized by that phase itself. Therefore one ought to avoid sleeping during the day.

Improper eating and behavior, which disorders the phases and leads to illness, also should be eliminated. In general, obsessing over thoughts associated with the conflicting emotions disturbs the active energy of the four phases. Because this generates illness, one ought to neutralize them in the fundamental dimension of embodiment, rather than letting any of the five poisonous conflicting emotions that have arisen become habitual.[31]

Further, because the active aspects of the four phases are based on the proper functioning of the stomach,[32] when these are disturbed they dry up and generate all illnesses. Therefore the palpable warmth of the radiance of fire, symbolized by the Lotus *dakini* in sexual embrace at the center of the generative energetic configuration at the navel, grows faint. By concentrating on this, the active aspect of the four phases in the form of fire arises from the point of sexual union, and one thereby can imagine that this fills all the pathways radiating from the energetic configuration at the navel. The movement associated with the active aspect of the four

phases as a whole generates the heat of the stomach, and because of this one cannot be harmed by any illness.

Also, in the case of warm disease, from the point of union of the cool, white, waterlike Vajra *dakini* in sexual embrace at the hub in the center of the energetic configuration of bliss at the crown of the head, the active aspect of the phases descends in a waterlike form. One should imagine that its coolness descends into all the energetic pathways. By descending into the pathways where heat illness is present, imagine that the heat dissipates outward. Then imagine moon disks at the center of white lotuses that are equal in number to the energy pathways below the navel. At their centers imagine an equal number of principal *dakini*s as above, from whose point of sexual contact the active aspect of the phases in a palpably cool form fills the area below the navel. In this way, all warm diseases will be quickly healed. If you wish, you can unite the illness into this cool active aspect with highly focused concentration, and then obliterate it with the creative energy of wind-movement and fire.

In the case of a composite illness, generate the *dakini* of the Buddha family in sexual embrace at the center of the Dharma energetic configuration at the heart. Then generate such figures in all energetic pathways radiating from the heart, and then in all the energetic pathways of the body. Imagine that the nectar of pristine awareness, the active aspect of the phases, flows from the points of their sexual union, filling the whole body like milk. Hold the breath a bit, applying holds from below and above.[33] Meditate for three days on expelling the disease out of the body, as if it were a sieve or transparent medium, as before. Composite diseases are thereby removed.

Further, in the case of cold diseases, imagine a red lotus at the energetic configuration of the navel. On this imagine the orb of the sun, together with its rays. Then imagine the active aspect of phases, in the form of palpably hot fire, flowing downward from the point of sexual contact of the *dakini* of the Lotus family residing there. Imagine that the space below the navel is filled with a circle of fire turning to the right. Breathe fiercely to make it rotate. In this way all cold illnesses are removed.

For wind disease, imagine a dark green *dakini* of the Karma family in sexual union at the places where wind is hidden. Then imagine that one's visualization enters the coarse and darkened creative potency there. Thereby wind illness is removed.

When the phases are disordered, their active aspect dries up and disease enters. Therefore concentrate as above with whatever visualization is applicable wherever disease, such as a wound and so forth, is found. This will harmonize the phases, bring the active aspect of their energy there, and thus cure the illness.

Thus one should know the visualizations for all types of illnesses. By so doing, one can solidly obtain direct knowledge of pure presence, quickly and without bodily obstacles.

I, Padma of Urgyen, have composed this in the cave on top of Rust Mountain. Without spreading it everywhere, I make it an experience for myself.

Profoundly sealed away. Secretly sealed away. Sealed away as a treasure. Sealed away by the *dakini*. This is good.

3

THE MEANING OF *A Section of Hidden Instruction, the Innermost Essence of the Dakini*

OUR SECOND TEXT, *A Section of Hidden Instruction, the Innermost Essence of the Dakini,* is a more comprehensive treatment of the five phases. It includes a presentation of the view of Dzogchen found in the Upadesha teachings, and quotes from several important Upadesha Tantras.[1]

It begins, like the first text, with a discussion of how the natural environment, consisting of five processes of earth, water, fire, wind, and space, arises from the primordial ground of being. Here the nature of this universal ground of being is discussed. What is the nature of this ground itself, independent of how it gives rise to both samsara and nirvana? According to the Dzogchen teachings, the ground has a structure, known as its essence, nature, and energy. Its essence is emptiness, its nature is radiant clarity, and its energy is pure presence.[2]

This ground is also the basis of going astray into samsara. *The Fivefold Essential Instruction* states that the five physical phases that we experience are concretizations of their "spontaneous glimmering in five hues" within the primordial ground. This section explains how this concretization occurs:

> When, with the creative energy of pure presence, which is an energetic response to what is present, one concretizes these hues, one goes astray because one does not understand them as both a lucid presence and as nothing. By appropriating the presence of these five hues into one's existence as a thing, one goes astray into a conceptualized essence. By appropriating the presence of these five spontaneous hues, the five external phases arise, as in the view of the heretics in which they are taken as eternal.

How does this Dzogchen view of reality explain our present situation in samsara, especially rebirth in a human body?

A new body is generated after the *bardo* state (intermediate state between death and life),[3] including the stages of gestation of the fetus in the womb, by the interaction of the active and concretizing functions of the five phases. How the subtle body arises with its chakras and channels is also discussed not only from the perspective of Tantrism in general, but from the special viewpoint of Dzogchen. Padmasambhava states:

> In other teachings there are many explanations of how the pathways, energy, and creative potency are three different things; here these three are held to be indivisible. The five phases arise through primordial spontaneous presence and the energy of mistaken response to it. The body is produced from this, then the pathways, then energy, which creative potency pervades. Pristine awareness pervades all of this and is indivisible. The *Tantra of Self-Generating Pure Presence* states: "The body is pervaded by great pristine awareness like oil in a sesame seed."

How the pristine awareness that belongs to pure presence is actually present in the body is discussed in detail. The body is a buddha-field where the five phases manifest their enlightened dimension through the channels and chakras. But in the Dzogchen teachings there are special channels and potencies not discussed in Tantrism, related to the experiences of "lamps" and "*vajra*-chains" mentioned here. These are direct manifestations of buddhahood, associated with the *thögal* practices of the Upadesha.[4] Padmasambhava does not avoid the obvious question: "Now, if in this treatise it is claimed that the mandala of buddhahood is indivisible from the pathways, energy, and potency of the aggregate of the body composed of the phases, then would buddhahood also be something relative?" To which he answers:

> While all sentient beings and their worlds are relative and impermanent, the buddha-mandala is free from conditioned existence, and the body according to this teaching is concretely held to be a buddha-mandala. The essential point is that it is not something relative. The whole generation of the perishable world arises from the delusion of lack of pure presence, which is itself the creative energy of pristine awareness. This is the essential point that distinguishes this instruction.

The remainder of *A Section of Hidden Instruction, the Innermost Essence of the Dakini* clarifies some of the esoteric practices of *The Fivefold Essential Instruction*. The colophon states: "This experiential core instruction from the cycle of essential teachings was put in writing on top of Rust Mountain and memorized by Yeshe Tsogyal. May it meet with someone who can use it. Thus *A Section of Hidden Oral Instruction of the Dakini* is completed."

4

TRANSLATION OF
A Section of Hidden Instruction, the Innermost Essence of the Dakini

I. Presentation of the Initial Ground of Being

IA. The Universal Ground of Being

"Universal" refers to what is elevated, in which there is no division into either samsara or nirvana. The *Blazing Lamp Tantra* states:

> The great primordial, initial purity is just so.
> Not made by anyone, self-luminous,
> From the beginning it is just itself.[1]

This initial ground, which cannot be found as samsara or nirvana, is an open luminosity free from any extent or dimension. Further, its essence is empty, its nature is radiant clarity, and its energy is unceasing. The *Sun and Moon Tantra* states:

> There are three modes of pristine awareness present
> in the ground:
> Its essence is the pristine awareness of primordial purity,
> Its nature is the pristine awareness of spontaneous
> presence,

Its energy is the pristine awareness of dualistic
manifestation.[2]

Therefore one does not speak of many modes of pristine awareness other than these three present in the ground. Further, the *Garland of Pearls Tantra* states:

Although one speaks of the nature of reality having
many facets,
Pristine awareness has three.[3]
In this ground neither delusion nor nondelusion can be found.

The *Tantra Without Letters* states:

Since, in me, self-arising pristine awareness is primordially
pure,
One is beyond the limits of is and is not.[4]

The *Penetrating the Essence of Sound Tantra* states:

Since lack of pure presence does not exist
in the pristine awareness
Of the primordial purity of the ground's essence,
It is beyond enumerations of one and two.
Indivisible, in its being it cannot even be found
as pristine awareness.
Its spontaneous actuality is called pristine awareness.
It is unborn, unceasing, and inconceivable, since
there is no determining it as an object.
Since its qualities and creativity are unceasing,

It is the ground that completes everything as a
mere playful manifestation.
The pristine awareness of its all-encompassing energy
Is the gate for the arising of unceasing variety.
The appearance of cessation is perfect in being
the ground's essence.[5]

The *Tantra of the Six Spheres* states:

Pristine awareness itself has three aspects;
This distinction in the ground is a verbal one.
The pristine awareness of the primordial purity
of the ground's essence
Is free from the stain of loss of pure presence.
The pristine awareness of the spontaneous
presence
of the ground's nature
Is free from the danger of delusory language.
The pristine awareness of the ground's all-encompassing
energy
Manifests by unifying everything into one dimension.[6]

Moreover, these three modes of pristine awareness are indivisible. The *Penetrating the Essence of Sound Tantra* states:

From its own side pristine awareness is indivisible,
Although its modes are three.[7]

Further, it is not an entity; it is empty, radiant, intelligent, and unchanging. It is also limitless. The *Tantra of Self-Generating Pure Presence* states:

Beyond the two extremes of eternalism and nihilism[8]

And the *Tantra of Self-Generating Pure Presence* states:

Intrinsically cleansed of the stain of the four extremes.[9]
In the ground neither delusion, nondelusion, and so forth, can be found.
This is the presentation of the universal, primordial ground.

IB. The Ground of Going Astray

Now the explanation of how going astray arises from the ground of being. One goes astray because one does not understand the three facets of pristine awareness as what appears and as one's own pure presence; further, one does not understand one's own pure presence as the three dimensions of being.[10] As the *Radiant Sphere Tantra* states regarding this going astray:

From pristine awareness itself there is going astray into lack of pure presence.[11]

Although there is no going astray in the ground of being, one goes astray due to a loss of pure presence, which is like a dream, an apparition, or a lion drowning in water. Moreover, the *Garland of Pearls Tantra* states:

Although the ground of going astray has many explanations,
they are summed up with the terms "spontaneous presence" (*lundrub*) and "integrative responsiveness" (*thugje*).[12]

The intrinsic illumination that is the essence of the ground shines in a spontaneous halo of five hues. When, with the creative energy of pure presence, which is an energetic response to what is present, one concretizes these hues, one goes astray because one does not understand them as both a lucid presence and nothing.

By appropriating the presence of these five hues into one's existence as a thing, one goes astray into a conceptualized essence. By appropriating the presence of these five spontaneous hues, the five external phases arise, as in the view of the heretics in which they are taken as eternal.[13] Furthermore, pure presence is the seed of everything. For example, it is like a wish-fulfilling gem, because it brings about what we intend.

The five phases originate as follows: Because the hues that intrinsically belong to pristine awareness are taken as entities by integrative responsiveness, they are established as something concrete. The phase of space arises when the presence of the blue hue of the pristine awareness of totality is appropriated. In the same way, the phase of water arises from the mirrorlike awareness; earth from the awareness of sameness; fire from the discriminating awareness; and wind from the all-accomplishing awareness. These arise when there is an appropriation of the luminosity that belongs to pristine awareness as a "this." These five phases, which possess a creative dynamism, all come about because they are pervaded with the creative dynamism of a loss of pure presence. This creative dynamism of the loss of pure presence is known as the pervasive wind. The phases have their individual functions because they are pervaded and energized with this wind.[14]

The beings and their environments in the perishable world-systems originate from the five phases as follows: in the expanse of space, a double-*vajra*-shaped wind arises; on this an ocean of water

arises; on this the golden earth arises; on this Mount Meru and the four continents arise. These are not born or manufactured; although they arise from the motivating cause of going astray due to a lack of pure presence, they are spontaneously self-originating because they remain the functioning of the pristine awareness that sustains them.

Sentient beings and their environments originate from these as follows: In this world system that is established from the five phases, there arise the five hues, which are the creative dynamism of pristine awareness. From the yellow hue, the life-form of the gods originates; from the green hue, the life-form of the titans originates; from the red hue, the life-form of human beings originates; from the black hue, the life-form of animals originates; from the white hue, the life-form of hell beings originates; and from the grey hue, the life-form of spirits originates. The creative dynamism of these gives rise to innumerable sentient beings.

The sun, moon, and stars originate from the sustaining power of pristine awareness and the collective merits of sentient beings. Because these five hues originate from the active energy of the five phases, sentient beings are called the *internal quintessence* of the environment. These beings are the result that is produced by *the initial and motivating* cause of a loss of pure presence. Because samsara is just this loss of pure presence, it neither increases nor is it destroyed. Thus the way in which sentient beings are the internal quintessence of their environments has been demonstrated.

II. How Things Are in the Midst of Our Present Situation

Now we shall set forth how things are in our present situation. Of the six life-forms, it is important to discuss the human body in

particular, because it is the basis for buddhahood, without which the latter will not come about.

IIA. The Stages in the Gestation of the Body

From the active energy of the four phases that are characterized by a loss of pure presence, sentient beings are born after the form of their father and mother, who represent the aspects of appropriate structure and intelligent functioning.[15]

Further, the active energies of the five phases ensure the full development of all parts of the body. While the body forms the basis for pure presence, the loss of this awareness manifests as the five poisons and the six aggregates.[16] As the *Garland of Pearls Tantra* states:

> Since the mind in its six modes subjectively latches
> on to things incessantly,
> Even the fundamental dimension of reality is imprisoned
> in its grasp.[17]

So here one relishes the experiences generated by the force of the distorting passions, and in conjunction with the active energy of the phases, pleasure arises. Then, having generated attachment to this in oneself, one engages in intercourse. Then countless disembodied sentient beings gather there by the force of jaundicelike lack of pure presence;[18] one enters the womb and its body develops. By putting this attachment into practice, saṁsara flourishes abundantly and one wanders there through old age and death.

Further, at the time of death when each phase separately vanishes into another, the manifestations of pristine awareness that arise in the *bardo* are not recognized. Then in the *bardo* of existence, through the jaundicelike ignorance regarding the parents

in intercourse, mind and motility get caught up in desire as long as the active energies of the phases are mixed together by the harmonization of the parents' pleasure. Thereby one enters into a limited form; that is, one is enveloped in the womb.

With the two creative potencies and the mixing of mind and motility acting as cause and conditions, the four phases take on their functions on the relative level. Mind and motility are the functions of the four phases on the ultimate level.

The stages in the gestation of the fetus can be divided into seven or eight: (1) oval (*mer-mer*), (2) viscous (*nur-nur*), (3) fleshy (*gor-gor*), (4) elliptical (*tar-tar*), (5) hardened (*trang-gyur*), (6) dwarflike (*kyab-jug*), (7) turtlelike (*ru-bal*), and (8) froglike (*bal-pa*) or fishlike (*nya*).[19]

The first stage lasts seven days: in the first four days, the activity of each phase develops; in the fifth and sixth days, two of these phases are combined; and in the last day, all four phases function together. In the first day of this oval stage, the water phase functions to unify the oval form after four hours into a mass the size of a hundred tiny seeds, which is the basis of this stage. Second, the function of the earth phase condenses the oval form into the size of ten tiny seeds. Third, action of the fire phase makes the oval form into an unmixed drop the size of thirty tiny seeds. Fourth, the action of the wind phase disperses the drop, dividing the seeds like quicksilver. Fifth, the oval form is stabilized again through the cohesive action of the water phase. Sixth, the oval form is matured and developed by the fire phase into two tiny seeds. Seventh, through the combined action of the four, in the drop of the two seeds a single subtle oval-like eye is formed.

Then, once again, the oval form is stirred up by the action of the phases: water breaks, earth presses, and fire condenses the oval

form. Thereby its oval form is burned and scattered by the wind into formlessness. Then, once again through the functioning of the phases, on the eighth day water condenses the developing fetus into the viscous stage, in which a mass the size of ten grains forms a single-energy pathway to the east the size of a piece of rabbit dung.[20] Once again, on the ninth day it is mixed by the earth phase into a mass the size of nine grains, forming the energy pathway to the south. Then on the tenth day the fire phase produces a mass the size of seven grains, forming the energy pathway to the west. On the eleventh day it is stirred up by the wind phase into a mass the size of five grains, forming the energy pathway to the north.

Then, as above, with the phases acting two at a time, the viscous stage generates the two eyes and the energy pathways like threads. Again, through the agitating action of the four phases, the earth phase breaks it up after a fortnight, producing two seeds the size of a thumb. Then it is broken up by the wind and all of the viscous form is divided, before water condenses and earth solidifies it, thus transforming it into the fleshy stage. The viscous form is matured by fire producing the energy pathways of the four energetic configurations and the pathway that is the basis for the sense organs. The first energetic configuration has sixty-four branches; the energetic configuration at the third eye, the focal point of clarity, is the basis of mind and motility and has thirty-two branches. The increase of fire produces the sixty-two pathways of the taste unifying energetic configuration. From this the peak operating configuration with three hundred and sixty branching pathways, as well as the two eyes, matures. Then the agitation of the wind phase differentiates each one's causal action. The fleshy stage of the fetus is brought together by fire, mixed with earth, and by

being condensed it is hardened into a single mass. The maturing action of fire produces the three channels with the one in the center like a pillar.

Then again through the functions of the phases, the developing fetus is hardened into the fishlike stage. Thus in seven days the fishlike stage assumes this form through the cohesive action of water. Earth condenses it, fire matures it, and the sense organs appear. The water phase produces the clarity of the sense organs. The earth hardens and forms the fetus into a turtlelike form, filling the mother's womb. Fire produces the limbs. The collecting action of wind is incorporated into the central pathway. At this time, because the phases, which are the foundation of embodiment, are in harmony, pristine awareness is generated.

Then, with water acting as a maturing cause, the condensing action of earth produces flesh and blood, generating a froglike form. Fire brings clarity to the eyes and consciousness, and the limbs are further developed. The wind phase makes for the clarity and lack of clarity of the limbs, the sense organs, the base of perception in the heart, as well as the aggregate, base, and field of consciousness. Thus there arise all the proper functions and defects of consciousness, sense organs, limbs, and so on, and the distinction between normal and abnormal. Positive or deleterious actions during pregnancy can affect the functioning of the phases of the mother. Thus having originated in the womb, after developing through seven or eight stages, a human being is born.

The active aspect of what is eaten and drunk by the mother, having entered at the navel pathway, generates the skin and hair in the early stages. The passions are latent and the wind phase makes for shaking and throbbing; fire increases consciousness so that at three months and twenty-one days, body and mind are active.[21]

Also at this stage there is taste, and by the combined activity of the four phases there is differentiation and maturation so that the whole body and its limbs can move. Two months and twenty-six days later, the fetus is viable. This is the *nirmanakaya.* The *Radiant Sphere Tantra* states:

> The meaning of having entered (the womb) is the
> *nirmanakaya.*[22]

The *Garland of Pearls Tantra* states:

> The great bliss of pure presence, pure and total presence,
> Through the union of appropriate function and intelligence
> Is produced by the projective movement out of the causal
> factor
> of father and mother.
> The seed whose cause is the five phases
> Is the objective manifestation of emptiness.
> By the blissful harmony of the two, there is the intelligence
> of appropriate function and the entry into the womb.
> This is the manifestation of pure presence
> from the ground.
> It has seven or eight stages, progressing through ten lunar
> months.
> Birth is the coming about of the *nirmanakaya.*[23]

In this *nirmanakaya,* the body and its energetic pathways are established at the same time. They are equal to the number of hair pores in the body; that is, eighty-two thousand. The generator energetic configuration at the (navel) has sixty-four spokes; the

memory configuration (at the heart) has thirty-two; the taste configuration (at the throat) has sixteen; the peak configuration (at the forehead) has three hundred and sixty; and the pleasure regulating configuration (at the crown) has twenty-eight.[24] Thus the five energetic configurations have a total of five hundred pathways connected to them. In the midst of these are three vertical pathways, like pillars. A branch of these is known as the crystalline.

The *Penetrating the Essence of Sound Tantra* states:

> *Roma* (lunar), *kyangma* (solar), *kundharma* (central), and *Kati shelbug*.[25]

As to which phases generate these four pathways: the energetic aspect of water generates *roma,* earth generates *kyangma,* wind generates *kundharma,* and fire generates *Kati shelbug.* Within *roma* the causal creative potency moves downward; in a man it is to the right, and in a woman it is to the left. Similarly the *kyangma* is reversed according to sex. Within this, the creative potency of pristine awareness moves. The *roma* turns to the left from the navel and extends to the penis, enabling the creative potency to descend. The *kyangma* extends to the left from the pathways at the heart up to the network of pathways at the throat. From there it divides into two upper pathways and enters into the brain. These channels, which are like the horns of an ox, extend to the pupils of the eyes and are responsible for visions due to pristine awareness. *Kundarma* is straight and is located along the center of the body; at its peak it divides into three. The central one enters the aperture of Brahma, while the right and left ones enter the ears.

Within these pathways is the energy. We can classify it into two categories: karmic energy and the energy of pristine aware-

ness. The energy of pristine awareness is mixed with mind; mind is mixed with karmic energy. Therefore they are inseparable. The *Penetrating the Essence of Sound Tantra* states:

> Mind and energy are mixed nondually.
> Therefore, energy produces all forms of karma.[26]

The energy of pristine awareness is itself unmoving; its creative functioning is called karmic energy. On account of the creative functioning of karmic energy, there is energetic movement. The movement of earth takes 5,400 forms; likewise the movement of fire, water, and wind, making for 21,600 forms of energetic movement. The *Penetrating the Essence of Sound Tantra* states:

> The energies that are based on creative functioning
> Have 21,600 forms of movement.
> This is known as the energy of great movement.[27]

The energy of pristine awareness also moves within the pathways, as the *Penetrating the Essence of Sound Tantra* states:

> True movement within the pathways has 126,600 forms.
> By this movement there is what is known as the energy of subtle movement.[28]

The functions of these pathways are the functions of samsara and nirvana, happiness and frustration, upward and downward movement. Further, within the pathways are the energies, and these are everywhere pervaded with the creative potencies. These can be divided into two: the causal creative potency and the pristine

awareness creative-potency. The explanation of the sixteen forms of the causal creative potency and the three forms of pristine awareness creative-potency can be seen elsewhere.[29] The functions of these potencies are the functions of samsara and nirvana, frustration and happiness.

In other teachings, there are many explanations of how the pathways, energy, and creative potency are three different things; here these three are held to be indivisible. By primordial spontaneous presence and the energy of mistaken response to it, the five phases arise. The body is produced from this, then the pathways, then energy, which creative potency pervades. Pristine awareness pervades all of this and is indivisible. The *Tantra of Self-Generating Pure Presence* states:

> The body is pervaded with great pristine awareness
> Like oil in a sesame seed.
> The luster and radiance of the body
> Come from the moisture of pristine awareness pervading it.[30]

IIB. How the Pristine Awareness That Belongs to Primordial Intelligence Is Present in the Body

This presentation has two aspects:

1. The body as a buddha-field
2. How primordial intelligence itself is present

IIB 1. The Body as a Buddha-Field

Within the five energetic configurations within the energetic pathways of the body, the active energies of the five phases obtained from the father and mother reside in the form of letters,

self-effulgent in the five hues of pristine awareness, like quicksilver and the *peelu* flower. HA and RA are at the forehead; RI and TSA at the throat; NAM and HRI at the heart; NI and HRI at the navel; SA and YA at the secret place.

These form the basis of primordial intelligence maturing externally into the five poisons, while internally they form the basis for the five forms of pristine awareness manifesting through their purification. Within the centers of the three primary channels are OM, AH, and HUM. Externally these form the basis of appearing in their impure mode as the three poisons, while internally they form the basis of appearing in their pure mode as the three fundamental dimensions of reality. Therefore this body, in its relative existence, is a buddha-mandala. The *Radiant Sphere Tantra* states:

> The creativity of error arises from the primordial ground.
> In the mandala of the body in which the phases are combined,
> The active energy and its pathways are indivisible.
> In this the letters, which are the seeds of buddhahood, are present.
> The male and female aspects are present in the five energetic configurations.
> Out of the three primary pathways, solar, lunar, and all-encompassing, the three dimensions manifest.
> While externally there are the five aggregates of form, feeling, judgment, motivation, and consciousness,
> Internally there are the five poisonous pollutants.
> Secretly, there are the five dimensions of existence.[31]
> More secretly, there are the five modes of pristine knowledge.
> While externally there are the five phases,
> Internally there are the five female aspects of buddhahood.

Secretly, there are the five *dakini*s.
More secretly, there are the five modes of appreciative knowledge.
While externally there are the five energetic configurations,
Internally there are their five creative potencies, the active energy of the phases.
Secretly there are the five letters: HRI, HA, RI, NI, SA.
More secretly there are the five *dakini*s.
All the constituents and energetic pathways of the body
Are a buddha-field of *daka*s and *dakini*s, its male and female aspects.
This actual body is a buddha-mandala.[32]

Therefore, because one's body is a buddha-mandala, when one makes an internal offering rather than an external one of desirable things, the merit is increased a thousandfold.

Meditating on an external divine–symbolic form and making external offerings means that one does not recognize this divinity within, and this is deleterious. Why? Because the body is a buddha-mandala, speech is mantra, and whatever passions arise are actually pristine awareness manifesting.

The two aspects of creative potency produce the variety of samsara and nirvana. If one does not develop the creative potency of pristine awareness, one wanders in samsara; if one does, there is buddhahood without any residue. If one damages the causal creative potency, one transgresses one's commitments, giving rise to much that is not virtuous, and one is reborn in hell. If one does not damage it, one accumulates all transcendent and immanent capacities, is inseparable from all the buddhas, generates all happiness and blessings, and does not generate all the obstacles created by non-

virtue. In short, one generates all the ordinary and extraordinary accomplishments. By increasing one's capacities and strengthening one's constitution, one masters the creative potency of pristine awareness, leading to indestructible buddhahood.

IIB2. How Primordial Intelligence Itself Is Present

Pure presence is present in the fundamental dimension of one's embodiment. In the heart, there are the forty-two peaceful manifestations of buddhahood; in the head, the fifty-eight wrathful manifestations;[33] in the five energetic configurations, the *daka*s and *dakini*s; in the three primary pathways, the three fundamental dimensions of reality; in all the energetic pathways and constituents of the body, the *daka*s and *dakini*s are present like a heap of seeds. The nature of one's body is radiant light.

Secretly, within the five energetic configurations there is a pathway that extends like a white silk thread, though it contains no matter or blood. From the genital region it extends to the navel, from the navel to the heart, from the heart to the throat, and from the throat to the brain. Within the head, from four pathways that turn to the right, there is a single pathway that makes for the appearance of sensory object-domains; dividing into five, it provides the basis for the individual senses. This pathway that makes for the clarity of the senses, their strengths and defects enters the eyes to the pupils. Thus there is the subjective experience of samsara and nirvana.

How the energy of our primordial state shines like a lamp is explained in the *Tantra of Self-Generating Pure Presence:*

> Four lamps shine in the openness of unconditioned space:
> The lamp of the eyes, the lamp of the openness of

creative potency,
The lamp of self-generating pristine awareness and
the lamp of the pure field of reality.[34]

The characteristics of these objective manifestations are given in the *Tantra of Self-Generating Pure Presence:*

In the pale, windless sky, the dimension of light and color
And the five forms of pristine awareness are self-
manifesting.
In the lamp of the pure field of reality,
Both delusion and the dimension of creative potency
manifest.
It is essence, nature, nonduality, beyond separation or
unification.
Here time is exhausted, it is free from activity,
like the essence of space.[35]

As to its objective manifestation, the *Penetrating the Essence of Sound Tantra* states:

The field of reality has internal and external aspects.
The external is the experience of the cloudless sky.
The internal is the way of appearance of the lamps.[36]

The *Tantra of Self-Generating Pure Presence* also states:

The eye investigates the realm of space.
The light subtly coils into forms.[37]

And:

> What this means is investigate the purity of space.[38]

An introduction is given in the *Radiant Sphere Tantra:*

> In the field of the Buddha *dakini*, the Padma *dakini* is mirrored.
> Space is opened up for the Ratna *dakini*,
> as well as a place for the Karma *dakini*.
> The reality-field of the Vajra *dakini* directly manifests.[39]

Such a visible manifestation of pure presence is not just something relative. The *Penetrating the Essence of Sound Tantra* states:

> Pure presence itself manifests like a *vajra*-chain.
> It is not something made by anyone in the present,
> past or future.
> It is itself unconditioned.
> Since the nature of this *vajra*-chain is pristinely
> free of all judgments about it,
> It is undeluded buddhahood.
> For a person who relies on this direct experience,
> Even the name of the three realms of samsara does not exist.
> Therefore, existence in these three is cut off.[40]

Because one sees the indivisibility of pure presence and its field, this is called perspective; because one remains in this dimension,

this is called meditation; because there is no striving involved, this is called conduct; the result is called wholly complete space. Experiencing this is done according to the oral instructions.

Now, if in this treatise it is claimed that the mandala of buddhahood is indivisible from the pathways, energies, and potencies of the aggregate of the body composed of the phases, then would buddhahood also be something relative?

While all sentient beings and their worlds are relative and impermanent, according to this teaching the body is concretely held to be a buddha-mandala, and the buddha-mandala is free from the conditioned. The essential point is that it is not something relative. The whole generation of the perishable world arises from the delusion that there is a lack of pure presence, which is itself the creative energy of pristine awareness. This is the essential point that distinguishes this instruction.[41]

An individual who knows that there is no delusion in the primordial ground of being and then goes astray establishing sentient beings and their worlds: this is like a white shell appearing yellow to a jaundiced eye. Although a variety of seemingly conflicting passions manifests, one knows that there is no delusion in the ground. Fully realizing this, then whatever one does, one knows there is no cause for delusion. Knowing this, primordially there is the freedom of self-generating pristine awareness; at the time of delusion there is the freedom of self-generating pristine awareness; and in the end there is the freedom of self-generating pristine awareness.

The *Radiant Sphere Tantra* states:

> First, light erroneously manifests as the phases.
> By this delusion, the form of sentient beings and
> their worlds is established.

Now, this delusion is purified by intrinsic intelligence.
The phases are purified in the dimension of
pristine awareness.
This nonresidue itself is buddhahood.
In other teachings, this is not the case.[42]

Other Buddhist teachings do not understand that the primordial ground is at first causal basis, then ground of delusion, and finally ground of freedom. They hold everything, all sentient beings and worlds, to be merely relative, impermanent entities conventionally produced by lack of pristine awareness as a first cause.[43] Further, they hold that the universe of sentient beings and their worlds is generated when the phases, arising within the mandala of space, mutually produce one another. When the four phases are in relative balance, the universe of worlds is generated. When the four phases become mutually destructive, at that time the universe is destroyed. In the same way, at the time when the phases mutually support one another, their active energy, which is found in all plant life, makes for the growth of sprouts, leaves, flowers, and so forth.

When the four phases are relatively harmonized, fruits mature and the energy settles in them. Then when the phases become mutually antagonistic, all the fruits and leaves fall. When each of the phases is functioning, there is dryness and so forth.

In the same way, the body of a sentient being is produced by the four phases. Having been born from the mother, up until age thirty the body's phases mutually assist one another. The increase in the active energy of the four phases produces power, skill, and clarity of mind. From age thirty to forty, the phases are harmonized and the energy settles in the constitution. Then the phases become mutually antagonistic; therefore one's power declines and one ages. When

the phases are in conflict and separate, there is death. In the same way, when the sun, moon, and stars' activity is developing through the mutual assistance of their phases, the days are long and it is warm in the spring. When the phases are equalized, day and night are equal. Then, when the phases are declining, the days are shorter and there is less heat in winter. When its phases are in conflict and separate, the sun dies. In the same way, the changes in the moon and stars are due to the functions of the phases; therefore because they are impermanent, they are held to be relative. These things are partially true or completely true for those of low capacity; therefore, when the phases are increasing and spreading, it is very important to apply oneself to their cultivation.

III. Experiencing How Pristine Awareness Is Present in the Body

IIIA. Experiencing This Naturally

The body, composed of the four phases, is the basis for self-generating pure presence. The basis of the body is the triad of pathways, psychosomatic energy, and creative potency. The pathways and their energy are united in the causal creative potency. The causal potency is the active energy of the four phases, the basis for pure presence, and is indivisible. The four phases each have their individual dynamism. Thus when these are equal or increasing, the body is maintained and all its excellent qualities are manifest. When these phases are disturbed by certain conditions, their energy goes out of equilibrium and they impair one another's functioning. As a result, a variety of conditions conducive to disease arise. It is very important not to disturb or impair the causal creative potency.

Because this potency is the active energy of the phases, not

impairing but rather increasing, it gives rise to all the special accomplishments. Because all the happiness and frustrations of samsara and nirvana are its functioning, it is very important to know the essential point of how to increase and not impair it.

First, increasing it naturally (see chapter 2, p. 25): from the first day of the lunar month, it increases in stages through all the energetic pathways. The natural process of increase is as follows: the causal creative potency, which is the active aspect of the phases, gradually increases from the first day of the lunar month. At this time it expands into the constitution from the configuration of energy at the sex organs. So then one should visualize the *dakini* of the Karma family in sexual embrace, symbolic of the active aspect of the phases, within the nexus at the center of the energetic configuration at the sex organs, known as the pleasure maintaining. Pleasing and beautiful ornaments indicative of the full richness of being ornament the *dakini*.

From the point of sexual union, the five colors of the active aspect of the phases each distinctly radiate uninterruptedly, filling the nexus of the energetic configuration and from there pervading all the energetic pathways of the body. This fills the whole body with the creative potency of the pure and total presence generated by innumerable such *daka*s and *dakini*s in sexual embrace. One meditates in this way on the first day. In the end this develops the experience of bliss and emptiness. By doing this the phases are harmonized and the conditions for disturbing body and mind cannot arise. The expansion of the active energy gives rise to meditative experience of the unity of pleasure and emptiness, the completion of the accumulations of merit, the purification of the taint of envy, mastery over samsara and nirvana, as well as realizing the mundane and supreme qualities and all the special accomplishments.

Next the active aspect increases upward, expanding to the navel

by the fourth day of the month. One should imagine the *daka*s and *dakini*s of the Lotus family at the nexus of the energetic configuration of the navel. As of the eighth day, one should imagine the *daka*s and *dakini*s of the Buddha family at the heart. As of the tenth day, one should imagine the *daka*s and *dakini*s of the Jewel family at the throat. As of the fifteenth of the month, the energy expands to the crown of the head and so one imagines the *daka*s and *dakini*s of the Vajra family at the nexus of the energetic configuration there. The visualization is as above.

Because the phases are expanding (upward to the crown), whatever merits one accumulates are increased, and for the same reason one shouldn't apply bleeding or burning treatments (to the crown) or one loses the creative potency. Because one's constitutional energy is expanding, one can massage a shaved place at the crown of one's head with a mixture of sesame oil, sandalwood, and musk. By thus increasing the active energy, the phases of the body won't be in conflict and the conditions for illness won't arise. If one does not do this meditation when the energy of the phases is increasing, they will be thrown out of balance; because the phases won't be in harmony, then disease and so forth can come about.

Then after this, the active aspect of the phases expands downward. By the nineteenth of the lunar month, it has expanded to the throat; by the twenty-second to the heart; by the twenty-fifth to the navel; by the twenty-eighth to the sex organs; and by the thirtieth to the soles of the feet. At these times one should proceed as above. One can apply a mixture of various oils, honey, and nutmeg to the soles of the feet as well as warm them in the sun. Thus the phases won't be disturbed and obstacles won't arise.

Through the growing of the energy of the phases and their expansion into the constitution, the contemplation of bliss and

emptiness arises, and one makes oneself fit to practice with a partner. Further, innumerable positive qualities arise. Based on this natural process of increase of the active aspect of the phases, one can add the secondary ingredient of such an objective support. This concludes the presentation of the natural process of increase.

IIB. The Essential Points of the Experience

Second, the explanation of the essential points of the experience is to be found elsewhere.[44]

IIC. The Objects of the Meditation Experience

Illness comes about in our body, which is produced from the active aspect of the four phases, as follows: The causal creative potency, on which the mind and the components of the body are based, is mixed with the active energy of the phases and is found in each. Therefore these are completely pervaded with movement, which can be shown to produce illness through contributory conditions (see chapter 2, p. 32).

When passionate attachment is the contributory condition, warm disease arises. Because the power of the wind-movement of fire increases when this warmth arises, the phases are disturbed and there is illness. When anger and unhappiness act as a motivating cause, wind-movement arises, thereby increasing its power. Once again, the phases are disturbed and there is illness. Then dullness acting as a motivating cause generates phlegm and cold. This increases the power of the movement of the water phase, disturbing the balance of the phases, and disease results. Illness comes about whenever the disharmony becomes great enough. Whenever the functioning of one of the three primary constituents is low, one

falls ill; whenever two are low or high, one falls ill. When they are neither high nor low but equal, illness cannot come about.

There is no sentient being who does not have a greater or lesser predominance of a phase. Sleeping during the day generally acts as a contributory condition for illness. Therefore if a person with a predominance of wind falls asleep during the day, they get a wind illness. Further, the wind can be combined with either heat or cold. In the same way, if a person with a predominance of earth sleeps during the day, they generate phlegm. If a person with a predominance of water sleeps during the day, they can get a cold disease. If a person with a predominance of fire sleeps during the day, they generate heat. All of these can in turn be associated with a warm or cold illness. This condition (of sleeping during the day) increases the power of whatever phase is predominant. By disharmonizing the phases, they begin to oppose one another. The disturbing phase produces the illness that is characterized by that phase itself. Therefore one ought to avoid sleeping during the day.

Improper eating and behavior, which disorders the phases and leads to illness, also should be eliminated. In general, obsessing over thoughts associated with the conflicting emotions disturbs the active energy of the phases. Because this generates illness, rather than letting any concepts of the five poisonous conflicting emotions that have arisen get into your system, one ought to neutralize them in the sphere of reality itself.

Further, because the active aspects of the four phases are complete based on the stomach, when these are disturbed they dry up and generate illness. The visualization in this case to cure the illness is as follows: By concentrating on the palpable warmth of the radiance of the fire symbolized by the Lotus *dakini* in sexual embrace at the center of the generative energetic configuration at

the navel, the active aspect of the four phases in the form of fire arises from the point of sexual union. One thereby can imagine that this fills all the pathways radiating from the energetic configuration at the navel. This generates the heat of the stomach, and because of this one cannot be harmed by any illness.

Also, in the case of warm disease, one visualizes the Vajra *dakini* in sexual embrace at the crown of the head. In the case of a composite illness, generate the *dakini* of the Buddha family in sexual embrace at the energetic configuration at the heart. Further, in the case of cold diseases, imagine the Padma *dakini* in sexual embrace with her consort at the navel. For wind disease, imagine the *dakini* of the Karma family in sexual embrace with her consort at the sex organs.

Further, in regard to all diseases one can visualize one's body as a sieve or empty form, as described above. Then allow the nectar to flow from the *yab-yum* forms that are the antidote to whatever disease is present. This will purify the body and its energies and eliminate the disturbance. Concentrate as above with whatever visualization is applicable whenever illness, such as a wound and so forth, is combined with heat or cold. This will harmonize the phases, bring the active aspect of their energy there, and thus cure the illness.

Thus one should know the visualizations for all types of illnesses. By so doing, one can obtain mastery of pure presence, quickly and without bodily obstacles, thereby fully awakening oneself.

This experiential core instruction from the cycle of essential teachings was put in writing on top of Rust Mountain and memorized by Yeshe Tsogyal. May it meet with someone who can use it. Thus *A Section of Hidden Oral Instruction of the Dakini* is completed. *Samaya*. Sealed. Sealed. Sealed.

PART TWO

Commentary

5

A Dzogchen Approach to Yoga

The View of Dzogchen

IN THE TIBETAN TRADITION, *Dzogchen* means the understanding of the total completeness, the primordial wholeness of a person. According to this perspective, this wholeness is present right from the very beginning of the path, from wherever we make a start. At first, this wholeness, this completeness, sounds very abstract and philosophical, as either a high-sounding platitude or the product of some long, complex process. A key to unlocking this seeming paradox, that the goal is present in the beginning, is to look directly to our experience in order to recognize that some kind of motivation already exists. From the point of view of Dzogchen, the whole teaching—its basis, path, and goal—can be understood by looking into our motivation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATION

All the Buddhist schools talk in some way at the beginning of the path about the importance of motivation, *bodhicitta*. The Mahayana tradition, for example, emphasizes the motivation to attain enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings. In that case, motivation is a basis for setting out on the path. But Dzogchen is

said to be a direct rather than a gradual path; thus motivation is not the starting point for doing something else. The starting point is not separate from the path and the goal.

What do we mean then by motivation in Dzogchen? Motivation, *bodhicitta*, is just another name for Dzogchen, the total completeness of one's being, present right now. More precisely, "motivation" here refers to that aspect of one's complete being, which is its ability to know itself. It refers to the pure fact of being aware, our capacity and desire to know. The goal of our capacity and desire to know is nothing other than this awareness itself. Knowing wants to know. We experience this basic knowing as a desire to understand our world and ourselves. Motivation is always already there, working, shedding light, making conscious, mirroring the whole universe, overcoming boundaries to the unknown. Its intention is to know, and the practice of Dzogchen is to experience and be this knowing.

This motivation, this desire to know, goes beyond mere curiosity. It is wholeness desiring to know, to mirror itself. Dzogchen is known in Tibet as the summit of all paths, a teaching directly from the mind of the primordial buddha, Samantabhadra. But this does not mean, as I have said, that it is not a practical path to buddhahood, nor that one cannot put into practice the perspective of Dzogchen right from the start of the path. It needs, however, to be transmitted in order to wake up or point out this primordial knowing in a person. In Dzogchen this is known as direct introduction.

This direct introduction is like seeing all of one's being in a mirror and understanding that one's own awareness is that mirror. It is with this experience that the way of Dzogchen begins. But such a perspective is extremely difficult for our limited ego-structure to

assimilate. It clashes with our self-image; it is too radical. We want to fit it back into our habitual perspective, to relegate it to the status of an experience, which easily becomes a memory that we can assimilate. It takes hard work to really be that mirror, to overcome that tremendous gulf of reified duality that prevents us from being it. We identify with too much of what the mirror reveals: all that we cannot accept and cannot understand in ourselves. We cannot be whole and overcome that split in ourselves that creates the observer who judges, who struggles, who strategizes, who defends, who needs such a self-image. Thus we can never truly relax and open up an awareness that is truly free to let everything be experienced, and to create out of that pure knowingness, *bodhicitta*.

What I am saying is that this knowingness, which is revealed in the direct introduction of Dzogchen and likened to a mirror, also reveals the obstacles to its full realization. In this sense, the knowledge revealed in direct introduction also provides the basis for overcoming obstacles in its very desire to know. Another way to put this would be to say that the experience of direct introduction provides us with a unique perspective and way of working with our situation. Thus it provides us with something related to (but ultimately more than) the desire to know that is involved in psychotherapy. We have at least a glimpse of a radically new perspective from which to observe ourselves. The methods of Dzogchen also provide us with a means to nurture this new perspective itself.

My primary teacher of Dzogchen, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, always said, "Observe yourself to discover how you are limited and conditioned, trapped in the cage of dualism like a little bird." What this means is that we need to see that all our obstacles have reified dualism as their root, that this is our fundamental limitation.

This is not our usual understanding of our problems or of our positive qualities. Usually we take up the position of somebody who is getting better or worse, who is OK or not so good, who wants to be better or does not give a damn, and so on.

Every path has its characteristic perspective. Without understanding this perspective you cannot put it into practice, which is meditation. That is how the path progresses, as one unfolds the dialectical dance between the perspective and its application in practice. For example, if one understands *vipassana* meditation as the cultivation of mindfulness, observing, noting, and letting go of experiences, this is only a preparation. It is cultivating mindfulness for the purpose of inner calm, *shamatha,* which is a very useful skill, but it is not the true meaning of *vipassana,* which is insight into the nature of reality. To practice *vipassana,* one has to understand the perspective one is implementing, which is explained in different ways in various Buddhist schools.

Dzogchen too has its perspective, but with Dzogchen we are not looking at our limitations as something we need to do something to or with, to analyze or overcome, or transform or transmute. Why? Because the nature of primordial knowing is such that by knowing something in this way, you are already beyond reified dualism. To truly know one's obstacles is to no longer have obstacles. This kind of knowing initiates a very powerful yet subtle dialectic in one's experience. At the very beginning of the Dzogchen path, one can begin to learn that the perspective and its practice are actually not separate, and that the motivation of our basic knowingness and its obstacles are really not separate either. This is what gives this path its uniqueness. Once we are introduced to this primordial knowing that serves as our basic motivation, we can begin to look further into both what it is and what our obstacles are.

For example, there is a Dzogchen approach to the practices of calming the mind, *zhine* (Sanskrit: *shamatha*), and insight, *lagtong* (Sanskrit: *vipassana*). This approach is found in the Nature of Mind Series (*semde*) of teachings. The introduction to this fundamental knowingness is very precise in the *semde;* one could say that it happens gradually. The reason that it is so precise is that it works step-by-step with the process of getting to know some fundamental aspects of our mind. It sets up a definite strategy about how we can come to experience ourselves beyond reified dualism. In this case then we must first know what this dualism is. In the *semde* one learns about it in two ways. The first is by direct confrontation through the power of the teacher's introduction and/or through exercises one does oneself. The second is by thorough familiarization through trying to control one's mind according to the traditional practices of calm and insight.

In the Dzogchen *semde,* one does not practice calm and insight for their own sake, as one does in other paths, but to reveal the inherent reification of subject and object in the effort of the mind to control and analyze itself. To practice them for their own sake means to progress gradually on the path by means of the experience and understanding these methods bring. To practice the nongradual path means to set about undercutting this inherent reification right from the start, but this does not mean one abandons all calm and insight. Rather, it means that one comes to recognize that these states are intrinsic aspects of our fundamental knowingness, and one does not have to strive after them. The subject, who strives to control the objects of his or her own experience through techniques of meditation, is a mental representation, an image. When one sees this, one can begin to relax

into another level of experience in which the object of meditation loses its power to disturb or distract.

The Heart of Yoga

We can apply the same approach to yogic practice. In the Tibetan tantric tradition there are yogic practices such as Yantra Yoga, involving movements and postures, breathing exercises, and visualizations. From a practical standpoint, what is the Dzogchen approach to these practices? If Dzogchen works with what is, in the sense of not struggling to change anything, and yogic practices require discipline and overcoming resistances to regular practice, how can we avoid struggle?

In the Dzogchen view, these resistances, whether they are laziness, perfectionism, chronic health complaints, and so on, are to be respected. In this sense, this way of working has some similarities to the psychotherapeutic understanding of resistances. The resistances are intelligent; they cannot be bullied out of the way by a sovereign ego.

What is the root cause of these resistances? Ignoring and not working with what is. In this case, "what is" means the reality that my body is not just an object, even if I treat it well with good yogic exercises and breathing practices. This reality includes the fact that our body has an unconscious meaning for us and that this meaning needs to be addressed.

How is this meaning addressed in traditional practices? I am not saying here that this is a cultural issue, or that these yogic practices need to be understood in the context of the culture in which they were developed (although that may indeed be useful). Rather, in the traditional context, questions of body image, body

ego, the relation of mind and body, and so on, were addressed in terms of the esoteric meditations on the *vajra* or "energy body," with its channels and chakras.

Now, the practices of the energy body are not beginning practices of this yoga; they can only really be done (that is, not just as visualizations) after one has mastered the method of held breath known as *kumbhaka* (Sanskrit), or "vase breathing." How can one dissolve this difficulty, in which questions of meaning are present from the start, but only seemingly addressed at an advanced level of practice? The solution is to realize first that the esoteric meditations on the energy body are actually the heart of this yoga and can therefore be placed at the beginning; and second, that these meditations can be understood to deal with the psychological issues of the unconscious meanings of the body mentioned above.

To repeat: Dzogchen, the way of self-liberation, is a nongradual path. This means that its principle, the understanding of the reality of self-liberation, can be applied right from the start of the path. *Dzogchen,* "wholeness," "completeness," means that understanding what is, in any moment or situation, is liberating. In Dzogchen this "what is" is explained in terms of essence, nature, and energy.[1] So whether one is a beginner or not, the outlook, the practice, and the way of taking the practice out into the world, are the same: to know and experience the essence-nature-energy of one's situation. This is to maintain beginner's mind. The essence of this beginner's mind is emptiness, its nature is clarity, and its energy is unceasing nondual manifestation.

We can approach tantric yoga practices from the standpoint of the gradual path: first you do this, then you do that. In fact, it seems absolutely necessary, because there is no way to nongradually do practices such as vase breathing or advanced asanas such

as the wheel and the peacock. This is true; one proceeds further and further into the yogic methods in stages. The key word here is "methods." Relatively speaking, yoga works gradually on harmonizing the relationship between body, energy, and mind. Through movement and asanas, one controls breathing and thus motility; through control of motility, one can control the mind; through controlling the mind, one can in turn influence motility.

But there are still the questions: What is the Dzogchen of our body-mind? What is the nature of its actual wholeness, unity, and integrity? The key point is to understand that the symbolism of the energy body, especially the central channel, is a way to begin to experience our embodied being as essence-nature-energy. The essence of embodied being is empty, or as I prefer to translate it, an open dimension, like space. The nature of embodied being is clarity, radiant transparency, like light. The energy of embodied being is the harmonious unity of the polarity of the male and female aspects of energy.

How can we begin to get an inkling or a taste of what this is about? Through "visualizing" the central channel, whose symbolism encodes the reality to which it refers. I put "visualizing" in quotes to indicate that visualization is not so much looking at something mentally as having a felt sense of the meaning that a symbol,[2] such as a white letter *A* or a *yidam,* presents. The central channel is the cosmic tree, the ridgepole of the universe, the tai chi, the singularity at the origin of all things, which is everywhere and nowhere. Our body is empty like space, but it is not a mere vacuity; it also has all its radiant energies; and its tensions are manifestations of harmonious balancing.

Another way to put this would be: the essence of body and mind are the same because both are like space; the nature of body

and mind are the same because both are radiant like light; and the energy of body and mind are the same because both are the harmonious play of the male-female polarity. So to find the unity or connection between body and mind, one must work with the "visualization," that is, the embodiment of the central channel. In this way tantric yoga is about discovering and living the unity of body-mind. It is also about discovering fundamental healing, as well as learning about, in relation to the primordial field of body-mind unity, the ways in which one's habitual energy-field and deeply unconscious body image are distorted. Some connections to this way of looking at yoga are offered by Jungian psychology, as well as alternative approaches to bodywork such as those offered by Arthur Mindell and Julie Henderson.[3]

So it is important to try and convey this perspective from the start. One can actually begin with the training in the central-channel practice, which usually forms part of more advanced breathing practices.[4] In this way one can make the goal the path. According to individual circumstances, one can work with the movements and breathing techniques of yoga, so one can physically do the esoteric breathing practices that accompany visualization practices of channels and chakras.

In this process one can actually begin to unify scattered energy, technically known as karmic motility, which moves in the right-left, lunar-solar, male-female channels, into the central channel. This unification of energy in the central channel brings about an experience of light that dissolves the mental representation that we have of our body-mind as an object of attachment and manipulation. The quality of this experience depends on which of the chakras is the focus of the unification. This embodiment of the unification of energy in the central channel is the heart of tantric

yoga. And the experienced meaning of the central channel is nothing other than Dzogchen, the heart and soul of beginner's mind/body.

Channels and chakras are not organs or structures found in our anatomical bodies. They are not objects, but ways that we can experience the world through our body. There is a specific Dzogchen approach to the tantric practices that involves the channels and chakras. The key point is to understand that the symbolism of the energy body, especially the central channel, is a way to begin to experience our embodied being as Dzogchen, the presence of total completeness. This total completeness has its essence, nature, and energy. The essence is empty, an open dimension, like space, and we can experience our body as this essence. The nature is clarity, radiant transparency like light, and we can experience our body as this radiance. The energy is unification, the polarity of the male and female aspects of embodied energy, and we can experience our body as this unification. If we have this ever-present goal in mind from the start of our practice of yoga, we will not get lost in technique or be discouraged by practical difficulties.

The Path of Passion

How can the Dzogchen approach to yoga that I have just outlined be applied more specifically to tantric, sexual yoga? As *The Fivefold Essential Instruction* says (p. 28): "At the time of intercourse when passionate attachment and the concepts associated with it arise, this is experienced as the creative energy of pristine awareness. If one does not know this, it is just attachment. Transforming this into pristine awareness means that by working with passionate attachment itself, passionate attachment is purified."

The key is to have present the experience of our body as the essence-nature-energy we have just spoken about, and apply it to sexual experience. If we deeply know that our body is an open dimension, like space, with porous boundaries, then there is no attachment to the body because we cannot grasp space. Rather we experience this spacious aspect of our body in a profoundly nonconceptual, inexpressible way (*mitogpa*). If we deeply know that our body is like radiant light, then there also is no attachment to the body, because we experience a brilliant clarity (*salwa*) by means of our body that is also ungraspable. If we deeply know that our body is like a field that unifies all dualities, then all sexual energies are unified in an experience of pure pleasure (*dewa*) that overwhelms the grasping mind.

More specifically, sexual experience concentrates energy in the genitalia, and while men and women are different in their patterns of sexual arousal, it is important for both to know how to unite the polarities of genitals and head, for it is especially this unification that generates pure pleasure. To this end, it is useful to know how to use yogic techniques and visualizations to either draw energy upward from the genitals, bring it down from the crown of the head, or let it pervade one's whole body. In this way you can maintain the right state (for each person) of energetic tension.

Let me give an example of working with another emotion using the same approach. The energy of anger concentrates in the heart and like fire spreads upward out of control, leading to angry concepts and actions. The energy of anger is itself mirrorlike pristine awareness; that is, we are adverse to a person or situation because we have projected that which we have rejected in ourselves onto the object. The object then acts as an irritating mirror showing us what we don't want to see in ourselves. If we directly experience

this mirroring function itself, rather than just its effects as angry concepts and actions, then while we may feel the energy of anger, it is not projected and it doesn't become a source of irritation. We can keep this mirrorlike energy/awareness in the heart and just as with sexual energy, let it spread throughout the whole body. To this end, it is useful to know how to use yogic techniques and visualizations to draw the fiery heart-energy downward toward the navel so it does not get out of control. If we can hold the energy down in this way, perhaps with the aid of the seed syllable for fire, RAM, at the navel, as well as holding the breath through the *kumbhaka* technique. we can then spread this fire to the whole body. In this way, the angry concepts generated by the rising fire of anger will subside into the nonconceptual state of mirrorlike pristine awareness.

The Dzogchen approach to yoga emphasizes simplicity of method, but it can do this only by virtue of its unique view of ever-present wholeness and nonduality.

Appendix 1

The Evolution of Our World: Buddhist Cosmology according to Longchenpa's *Wish-Fulfilling Treasure*

BUDDHIST COSMOLOGY INCLUDES much more than a description of how the five phases generate the cosmos. In order to better understand Padmasambhava's teachings, it is useful to have some background in Buddhist cosmology. Padmasambhava's teachings show us very practically how we are a microcosm of all the forces of samsara and nirvana. Buddhist cosmology describes the macrocosm, the totality of both samsara and nirvana. This is the subject matter of the opening chapters of Longchenpa's *Wish-Fulfilling Treasure* (*Yizhin Dzod*).

As I mentioned above in the preface, I was fascinated with the Buddhist creation story, in which our present world-system originates from a mandala of wind, which itself originated from the karma of sentient beings of the previous world-system. This wind then condensed into the phases of water, earth, and fire to form the material world. Our world system consists of four continents in a cosmic ocean surrounding Mount Meru, where the various gods dwell. We live on the southern continent, Jambudvipa. Was this creation story an integral part of the Buddhist view or merely a tale taken from the general stock of Indian mythology?

Longchenpa gives us a deeper view by showing how Buddhist

cosmology is the story of our universe told as a drama of going astray into samsara, and how the buddha-fields were manifested in response. Once we understand cosmology as this unfolding drama, we can better understand how it plays out in us, the microcosm.

In this story, $1{,}000^3$ ($1{,}000 \times 1{,}000 \times 1{,}000$) world systems like our own are the field of activity of a *nirmanakaya* (Sanskrit) buddha such as Shakyamuni. These systems are further embedded in a much larger system, the "Field Adorned by Flower-Essences" (Sanskrit: *Ghanavyuha*), which is the field of activity of the *sambhogakaya* (Sanskrit) buddha, usually referred to as Vairocana. In order to express the enormity of this vision before the advent of modern conceptions of infinity, Buddhists used the image of the supercosmic buddha Vairocana. In his heart is a smaller supercosmic field. This field is made up of twenty-five universes in which different aspects of his enlightened qualities are manifested. In each of those universes there are *nirmanakaya* buddhas; that is, buddhahood taking on physical form. Of these twenty-five worlds, each an aspect of the body of the supercosmic buddha Vairocana, our world is located in the middle, the thirteenth world. This thirteenth world is a field of operation of Shakyamuni, equivalent to 1000^3 of the little Mount Meru worlds described above.

Furthermore, temporally speaking, during periods of stability in these little worlds such as ours, there are one thousand manifestations of the *nirmanakaya*. Our perishable world-system is divided according to the four defining characteristics of all entities of reality: origination, stability, destruction, and emptiness, projected into four epochs (*kalpa*) of enormous lengths of time. In our world, Shakyamuni Buddha is the seventh *nirmanakaya* manifestation out of one thousand.

The point of these supercosmic visions of worlds upon worlds is not to study them as if they were scientific descriptions, but to make us understand the awesome, wonderful fact that we embody all these worlds. How? That is what Padmasambhava's teachings show us very directly. Longchenpa points to this symbolically in his description of Buddhist cosmology. Behind all this is a Tibetan conception of Buddhist teachings, known as the nine vehicles (*yana*s), which move deeper and deeper into the heart of reality, from Sutric teachings to tantra and then to Dzogchen.[1]

"Cosmology" here means the manifestation of samsara, which itself manifests the display of the buddhas. The drama of enlightenment takes place in this process, our world being a very small but important part of this drama. It is important because it is the world from which sentient beings begin their long road to awakening.

In presenting this story, Longchenpa basically follows the outline of the third chapter of the *Abhidharma-kosa*,[2] but gives structure to a system that could have lapsed into mere mythology, originally adapted as it was from traditional Indian sources. We will focus on his teaching about the five phases.

As mentioned, our world goes through four stages of origination, stability, decay, and cessation. Longchenpa divides the epoch of origination into:

1. The site for the foundation of the world system (*ten zhi*), the five phases.
2. The foundation (*ten*), the cosmic mountains, oceans, and continents.
3. Sentient beings, who inhabit the system (*ten*).

The following is a translation of Longchenpa's discussion of the first topic, from his *Wish-Fulfilling Treasure* (*Yizhin Dzod*).[3] His work is in verse form with his own commentary on the verses:

> Now, in order to present the nature of our world system in more detail, I shall first present a summary:
>
> Out of the appearance of the buddha-fields
> I shall present, in particular, the Saha world system,
> Which has four epochs: origination, stability, destruction,
> and emptiness.
>
> I have shown in the previous chapter how the 1,000[3] transitory world-systems arise from the Field Adorned by Flower-Essences,[4] which is the display of the buddha-fields that I have just discussed. Now we should properly understand the sentient beings and their environments in this perishable world-system by means of the time periods of origination, stability, destruction, and emptiness:
>
> First, the appearance of the time period of origination:
> Sentient beings originate first from above
> And the environments that are founded on the phase
> space, originate in the same way.
> The environments founded on the earth phase,
> originate from below.
>
> At this time, if we take the origination from the start, that is, after the twenty interval epochs (*barkal*) of the epoch of emptiness have been completed,[5] the palaces of light,[6]

founded on space, originate from above. Sentient beings, who are the quintessence of the world, also spread from above to below.

First, the explanation in stages of that which is founded on the earth phase:

If I sum these stages up in brief, there are three:
The site for the foundation, the foundation,
and the founded.

To make a proper start, I shall make a presentation summed up according to the sutras of the ordinary pursuit, which give a mythological presentation of the perishable world-system; according to that which is superior to the above, the extraordinary pursuit represented by the Hua Yen teachings; and also according to the Tantras.[7] First, in showing the Epoch of Origination, there are the site for the foundation of the world, the phases; the foundation, the cosmic mountains, and so on; and what is founded on this, the sentient beings. Of these:

First I shall show how the phases are built up.
Following the completion of the twenty interval epochs
of the epoch of emptiness,
The mandala of wind equal in extent to the $1{,}000^3$ world
systems
Arises on the surface of space radiant with white light
called pure mind.

It is said in the *Summary Verses on the Precious Gem (Arya Ratna Guna Samcaya Gatha)*: "The wind phase is founded

on space and water is founded on this. On this the great earth phase is founded, and on this the moving beings are founded." The explanation in stages is as follows: following the epoch of emptiness, at first there is space, a white light called Pure Mentation, whose motivating cause at this time is the collective karma of sentient beings, which gives rise to the environment of one world system of $1{,}000^3$ perishable worlds.[8] The remote motivating cause of the mandala of wind on the surface of this space is the collective karma of sentient beings born here. The proximate motivating cause is wind. If you ask how this is, the answer is as follows:

Stirring up, all-encompassing, pounding,
Collecting, maturing, separating:
These are the six winds that gradually stir, spread,
scatter, collect, originate, and separate.

Out of that which is called the stirring up wind, which has just come up, the all-encompassing wind, by extending in all directions, condenses like fog in the sky; the pounding wind, which has as its symbol the seed syllable YAM, scatters this fog like clouds in the sky. The collecting wind, by bringing all these winds together, thickens and heightens this vast field of reality. After the shining, red, fiery maturing wind spreads and burns, the circle of wind then arises that is level and mild. Various colors are each scattered by the separating wind with the rising of roaring noises. From among these six winds, the stirring up of the stirring up wind is the real originator. If one asks what is the size and

color of this mandala of wind, the answer is as follows:
Green in color, shaped like a double-*dorje*
surrounded by a circle,[9]
It is six million *yojanas*[10] in height and of immeasurable
width,
And hard like a *dorje*.

The color of this wind is like sapphire. Its shape is like a double-*dorje* with a circle around it. Its size is of unlimited width, and it is six million *yojanas* in height. Its function is to solidify and harden, and based on this function, the functions of the mandalas of water and so on are founded. From this wind there comes the mandala of water. In the space above:

From the condensation into clouds having the
essence of gold,
By the falling rain from above, the mandala of water
forms.
It is completely round, and called Fine and
Clear.

Following the origination of the mandala of wind, the motivating cause of the mandala of water is as follows: from the condensation in space of clouds having the essence of gold, there falls a stream of rain as thick as cart axles. It is called Fine and Clear Water. Its shape is round and it originates like the full moon. Its size:

Its height is 1,120,000 *yojanas*.
It is surrounded by the founding wind.

This mandala of water is 1,120,000 *yojana*s in height. It does not pour over its edge because it is encircled by the founding wind. After this, the mandala of earth originates:

Since water is stirred up by the stirring up wind,
Earth originates on this as a four-sided mandala.

The motivating cause of earth is as follows: from the mandala of wind beneath the water, the stirring up wind arises with a grinding sound, and from all the motivating causes having been stirred up and combined together, the golden earth-foundation is established like a piece of cloth appearing on a lake. It is four-sided and golden in color. As to its size:

Its height is 320,000 *yojana*s
While its diameter is 1,203,450 *yojana*s.

The depth of the water is 800,000 *yojana*s and the height of the earth that remains above it is 320,000. The diameter of both the water and earth mandalas is 1,203,450. Its circumference is three times that. These complete the presentation of the site for the foundation of the world.

Appendix 2

On the Five Phases

AS MENTIONED IN THE PREFACE, one of the reasons I was originally attracted to these texts was because of their multileveled approach to the five elements. This was fascinating to me both as a student of Dzogchen and as a practitioner of traditional Chinese medicine (which employs a different version of five-element theory). What I loved about these texts was that the deeper I explored the realm of the body and matter, the further I went into the domain of spiritual experiences beyond mind. Conversely, the more I entered the domain of spiritual experiences beyond mind, the more I entered the world of the body as a microcosm of the Buddhist cosmos. Both mind and matter pointed to a qualitative field of experience that unified them.

The usual translation for the Tibetan term *jungwa* is "element," well known from the ancient Greek classification of the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water. Regarding this translation, Manfred Porkert's discussion of the translation of the Chinese term *hsing* as "element" applies also to the Tibetan term *jungwa:*

> Between the 16th and the 19th centuries, European missionaries aroused interest in and furthered understanding

> of Chinese culture by alluding, wherever feasible, to familiar notions and concepts. Because of the limitations of their philological resources they rendered *wu-hsing* by "Five Elements" . . . The 5 Evolutive Phases, as their name implies, constitute stretches of time, temporal segments of exactly defined qualities that succeed each other in cyclical order at reference positions defined in space. Or, couched in terms closer to practice, the 5 Evolutive Phases define conventionally and unequivocally energetic qualities changing in the course of time. They typify the qualities of energy by the use of 5 concepts (wood, fire, earth, metal, water) that, because of the richness of their associations, are ideally suited to serve as the crystallizing core for an inductive system of relations and correspondences.[1]

The Tibetans follow the Indian tradition of five phases: earth, water, wind, fire, and space. "Evolutive Phases" is clumsy; I prefer "phases" to indicate that we are primarily dealing with processes.

The key idea regarding the phases in these two texts is that they have two modes of functioning: the active, emblematic of forces acting against entropy, the energetic functioning of the pristine awareness that is the quintessence (*chud*) of the evolutionary process; and the "structure-producing" ("structive" is Porkert's awkward term for processes that produce structures in nature), emblematic of entropic, structural materialization of the commonly experienced phases that make up the environment. But these two modes are complementary, acting together in a kind of homeorhesis, which is the dynamic, natural tendency of a living organism to continue its evolving development under different environmental conditions (as compared to homeostasis, the static maintenance of equilibrium).

Our static, perishable world-system, as presented in the standard Buddhist cosmology of Mount Meru, seven mountain-chains, oceans, and four continents, is an imaginative model of our world as a closed system that is running down.[2] Experientially speaking, it represents a hardening into dead forms of our open universe of experience. Yet in such a dynamic process, ever-new possibilities for self-organization are being presented with each new instability (change). We can respond creatively if we can be guided by *rigpa*, which may here be translated as the organizing information-energy of the universe, whose creativity is the pristine awareness of life. Instabilities usually increase our randomness and disorganization, both physically and mentally, but this need not be the case, even in the physical world:

> Physical energy itself may be an agent in the service of evolution. It would then be superfluous to assume a dualism between physical and psychic organization—all organization in the universe would be physical and psychic at the same time.[3]

The active energy of the phases themselves is the dynamism of pure presence. This active energy expresses itself in the five forms of pristine awareness. Although our language makes it difficult to avoid using terms like "awareness" here, these five do not belong to the realm of *sem* ("mind"), but to the realm of *semnyi* ("mind-as-such"). Mind-as-such, the nature of mind, is the information-energy of an intelligent universe. Mind would then be a loss of the optimal information-energy of the organism as organizing agent, leading to a distorted view of the world (*marigpa*). This loss of optimal functioning manifests as a reification of the energy dynamics of

the universe flowing through us. Out of this develops the duality of the apprehending subject and the apprehended object.

Pure presence, however, is inseparable from the ground of being, and its unitary functioning is depicted in the texts as a self-presentation or intrinsic luminosity, as opposed to a reflected radiation. This luminosity presents its dynamic transformations in the form of the five hues of pristine awareness. One mode, for example, is the pristine awareness of space as an open dimension of lived space. In our usual experience we convert this into a something that is standing opposite us and is against us: space as a container. And thus there is the origin of represented, measurable space as distance, whose origin in the oriented space of lived experience is lost.

These correlations between the phases and the forms of pristine awareness make it clear that the distinction here is not between mind/consciousness and matter, but between active and structive energies, each tending in a certain direction, like centrifugal and centripetal forces, although never wholly one or the other. Within the active energy there is a structive aspect (yin within yang). It must be remembered that both of these are fluctuations of the ground of being. While there is a breaking away from the ground, the ground remains unaffected by the fluctuations of samsara and nirvana.

Translating the Tibetan term jungwa as "phase" rather than "element" is my attempt to render the dynamic, process nature of the world as understood in tantra and Dzogchen. Furthermore, they are phases because they indicate the cyclic nature of all processes, whether they be of a fetus or the whole universe, from birth to maturation to death.

Appendix 3

H. V. Guenther's Approach to Translation

I HAVE TRANSLATED TERMS in this book based on H. V. Guenther's approach to translation. Some examples are my translations for *kusum* (Sanskrit: *trikaya*), usually translated as the "three buddha bodies." I translate *ku* as "dimensions of being" or "dimensions of embodiment" (*sum* means "three"). Likewise, I use "fundamental dimension of embodiment" or "sphere of the pure fact of Being" for *choku.*

H. V. Guenther employed various translations of the term *kusum* throughout his career. A brief examination of these translations is a good way to understand the motivations behind his, and thus my, approach to translation, whether I use his terminology or not. Furthermore, such a discussion helps open us up to the depth and subtlety of the Tibetan tradition.

As far back as 1957, Guenther wrote in *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma:*

> The Buddhist term *kaya* and the adjective *kayika* do not so much endnote the physical body but an integrated organization and function pattern. *Kaya* comprises the function patterns (*skandha*) of feeling, sensation and motivation. . . . The

> texts are quite explicit on the point that *kaya* does not mean the physical body as contrasted with some mental or spiritual substance.[1]

In *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* (1959), he used the Sanskrit terms *dharmakaya, sambhogakaya,* and *nirmanakaya.*[2] With *The Life and Teaching of Naropa* he began his philosophical quest for an adequate translation:

> *sku, gsung, thugs.* These terms correspond to Sanskrit *kaya, vak, citta,* which are usually translated by "body," "speech," and "mind." However, what we ordinarily understand by them is in Tibetan *lus, ngag, yid.* The Tibetan terms *sku, gsung, thugs* never refer to concrete phenomena, but rather to their significance. Genetically speaking, *sku, gsung, thugs* are present even before there is a body, speech, or a mind in the conventional sense of these words. On the other hand, they are no Platonic ideas either. Hence whenever philosophical exactness becomes necessary the ordinary linguistic translations will not do and must be replaced by others.[3]

The question of when "philosophical exactness becomes necessary" depends upon the perspective and context a translator brings to a work. Guenther's approach since the 1950s was to understand Tibetan Buddhism from a Western perspective, which was the title of his 1977 collection of essays.[4] There is more than one valid perspective; perhaps, in the end the one we are attracted to is a matter of taste.

In any case, in *The Life and Teaching of Naropa* (1963), under the influence of post-Heideggerian existential thought, Guen-

ther referred to the *kayas* as the "existential norms" of "authentic being-in-the-world" (*nirmanakaya*), "authentic being-with-and-for-others" (*sambhogakaya*), and "authentic dealing with situations" (*dharmakaya*).

In *The Royal Song of Saraha* (1969) the approach is still existential: the "three existential norms" are "authentic being," "communicative being," and "noetic being." He states: "The Tibetan term *sku* always indicates the dynamic character of being and existing; the static aspect of 'body' is termed *lus*."[5] Here we already see a hallmark of his approach. Guenther's work involved applying what he calls 'dynamic, process thinking' to Buddhism, along with an accompanying polemic against "static, substantialist" thinking. Despite this interest, he virtually never referred to process thinkers such as Whitehead or Hartshorne. Whether one thinks this distinction is important determines, I believe, whether one finds many of his translations of value or not.

In *The Tantric View of Life* (1972, a rewriting of *Yuganaddha*, originally published in 1952),[6] he stated simply: "Embodied Being is termed *sku* (*kaya*), embodied loss of Being *lus* (*deha*)."[7] He later elaborated:

> Dharmakaya is a term for Being-as-Such, experienced as an absolute value; Rupakaya is its representation in a perceptible way; that is, through being a Nirmanakaya, man represents the ultimate value of Being, and through simultaneously being a Sambhogakaya he is empathetically one with the ultimate value of Being.[8]

In *Kindly Bent to Ease Us: Part One; Mind* (1976), employing a phenomenological approach, *ku* became "founding stratum" in

relation to the "founded" which is *yeshe*.[9] This distinction comes from the phenomenological philosophy of Husserl, as Guenther notes, where it refers to the relationship between two experiences. For example, a sense experience can be a "founding stratum" for a feeling, which is "founded" on it. This was important for Husserl because he wanted to describe the subtleties of experience rather than give causal explanations. In *Kindly Bent to Ease Us: Part One*, the three *kaya*s are "founding stratum of embodiments and bearers of meaning," "founding strata of engagement in a world-horizon," and "founding stratum of meaning."[10]

It is at this time that Guenther began his turn toward systems theory and cognitive science, especially as presented by Erich Jantsch, who published *Design for Evolution* in 1975 and with whom Guenther became friends. Although the leitmotif of "dynamic, process thinking" continued throughout this phase of Guenther's work, an adequate appraisal of it deserves a separate discussion.[11]

My approach to translation is outlined in the preface to *Primordial Experience: An Introduction to rDzogs-chen Meditation*.[12] This approach was further employed in *You Are the Eyes of the World*,[13] whose terminology is mostly used here.

Appendix 4

Selected Technical Terms

THE FOLLOWING TERMS have been selected for this list because of their centrality to and frequent occurrence in the texts and commentary. The Tibetan translations are rendered first in Wylie transliteration and the phonetic version follows in parentheses.

active energy, active aspect, *dvangs ma (dangma)*
appropriate structure, *thabs (tab)*
bodily constituents, *khams (kham)*
causal creative potency, *gyu'i thig le (gyu'i tigle)*
conflicting emotions, *nyon mongs (nyongmong)*
contemplation, *bsam gtan (samten)*
creative energy, dynamism, *rtsal (tsal)*
creative potency, *thig le (tigle)*
dimensions of being, embodiment, *sku (ku)*
divine-symbolic form, *lha (lha)*
energetic configuration, nexus, *'khor lo (korlo)*
energetic pathway, *rtsa (tsa)*
epoch, *bskal pa (kalpa)*
essence, nature, energy, *ngo bo, rang bzhin, thugs rje (ngowo, rang zhin, thugje)*

extraordinary pursuit, *thun mong ma yin pa'i theg pa (tunmong mayinpay thekpa)*
fundamental dimension of embodiment, sphere of the pure fact of being, *chos sku (choku)*
ground of being, *gzhi (zhi)*
integrative responsiveness, *thugs rje (thugje)*
intelligent functioning, appreciative knowledge, *shes rab (sherab)*
lack of pure presence, *ma rig pa (marigpa)*
metabolic capacity, *drod (drod)*
motility, *rlung (lung)*
motive force, *snying po (nyingpo)*
ordinary pursuit, *thun mong gi theg pa (tunmongi thekpa)*
phases, *'byung ba (jungwa)*
primordial purity, *ka dag (kadag)*
pristine awareness, *ye shes (yeshe)*
pristine awareness of fundamental sameness, *mnyam nyid ye shes (nyamnyi yeshe)*
pure and total presence, *byang chub (changchub)*
pure presence, primordial intelligence, *rig pa (rigpa)*
residual part, residual aspect, structive energy, *snyigs ma (nyikma)*
spontaneous presence, actuality, *rang bzhin (rangzhin)*
vase breathing, *kumbhaka* (Skt.), *rlung bum pa can (lung bumpachan)* (Tib.)

Notes

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

1. They are found in the *Khandro Nyinthig* (*Mkha' 'gro snying thig*), vol. 3, pt. 2, of the Four Collections of Innermost Essence, the *Nyingthig Yazhi* (*Snying thig ya bzhi*) (New Delhi: Tulku Tsewang, Jamyang and L. Tashi, 1971) fols. 35–67 and 70–94. These works were compiled by Longchenpa.

   On the *Nyingthig Yazhi* and Longchenpa, see David Francis Germano, *Poetic Thought, the Intelligent Universe, and the Mystery of Self: The Tantric Synthesis of rDzogs Chen in Fourteenth Century Tibet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1992), chap. 2.
2. C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Alchemy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 289.

INTRODUCTION

1. C. G. Jung, *Man and His Symbols* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1968), 87.
2. See Robert E. Thayer, *Calm Energy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), especially chap. 6, "Why Do We Have Moods?" and chap. 8, "The Biopsychology of Energy and Tension."

3. A. H. Almaas has written about this polarity in terms of the psychological and essential qualities he calls Merging and Separation. See for example *The Pearl Beyond Price: Integration of Personality into Being; An Object Relations Approach* (Berkeley, Calif.: Diamond Books, 1988), 296–99.
4. Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey, *A Commentary of the Kalachakra Tantra* (Dharamsala: LTWA, 1985), 55. The vaselike meditation on the retention of breath (*kumbhaka*) is a means of directing energy from the left and right channels into the central channel. "The stage of generation" (*kyerim*) refers to mandala visualizations.
5. Matthew Kapstein, *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 48.
6. Quoted in *Tibetan Assimilation*, 25.
7. Ibid., 159.

Chapter 1. The Meaning of *The Fivefold Essential Instruction*

1. On the buddhas, *daka*s, and *dakini*s of the five families, see H. V. Guenther, *Matrix of Mystery: Scientific and Human Aspects of rDzogs-chen Thought* (Boulder, Colo. and London: Sham-bhala, 1984), 105–9. For a historical perspective, see David Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism: Indian Buddhists and Their Tibetan Successors* (Boston: Shambhala, 1987), 1:189–98.

Chapter 2. *The Fivefold Essential Instruction*

1. The universe is "intelligent," the duality of matter and mind is the result of an evolutionary process.
2. In the dance of creative energy lies the freedom to go astray.

Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche used the image of someone dancing in a completely free and open space, whose own movement leads them to stumble and fall. "Concretization" or "reification" is the name given to this process by which emanation (symbolized by the radiation of light) from the primordial source takes on hardened forms. In the next sentence the energy of this reification is called wind or motility (Sanskrit: *prana;* Tibetan: *lung*).

3. There now begins a listing of the correlations between the five phases and the five forms of pristine awareness (*yeshe*), found throughout tantric literature. These five are also correlated with the five psychophysical constituents. On these five, see for example, H. V. Guenther, *The Tantric View of Life* (Berkeley, Calif. and London: Shambhala, 1972), 54–56. Only four are specifically mentioned in the text, but this is not unusual. The fifth form of pristine awareness, here representing the phase of space, pervades all the others.

   The four forms of pristine awareness often are depicted as the deities in the four directions of a mandala, while the fifth, representing the essence of all, resides in the center as the pristine awareness of the pure fact of Being (Tibetan: *choying yeshe;* Sanskrit: *dharmadhatu jnana*).
4. In Buddhist cosmology, fire is usually said to be the phase that matures the other processes, such as in the destruction of the perishable world-system. See appendix 1.
5. Sentient beings are likened to the precious contents (*chud*) of a vessel, the world.
6. The three spots of light are the basis for the three realms of formless gods, gods of form, and sensuous beings.
7. "Lack of pure presence" (*marigpa*) refers to a nondual presence

(rigpa) in which objects are experienced like reflections in a mirror; that is, their appearance is not separate from the surface of the mirror. Taking the reflections in the mirror to be reality and acting toward them as such leads to embodiment in the six life-forms. This going astray takes place both in the *bardo,* leading to a new embodiment, but also in our present experience.

8. Mutual assistance and restraint of the phases by one another is also the principal mode of analysis of the phases in traditional Chinese medicine. See Ted Kaptchuk, *The Web That Has No Weaver* (New York: Congdon & Weed, 1983), 343–57.
9. The outer level is the environment, the inner level deals with living organisms, and the hidden level deals with the feeling life of these organisms, their "happiness and frustration," their "active aspect."
10. As we go deeper into the experience of energy we come to the level of the creative potencies (*tigle*) that underlie the energetic experiences of happiness and frustration in samsara. The practices at this level follow this energy as it moves between male and female polarities of the body during the lunar month.
11. Esoteric practices have far-reaching, unconscious effects on one's body-mind. Therefore it is very important that their methods are applied correctly. See my remarks on view in the introduction.
12. The following presentation of how the body is a microcosm of the tantric universe is critical to understanding much of the monthly cycle of Tibetan tantric rituals from new moon to full moon and back again.
13. "Energetic configurations" (chakras) are extensively explained in the tantric literature. A thorough presentation,

particularly as it relates to the practice of inner fire, is found in Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss* (London: Wisdom, 1982), chap. 1.

14. See chapter 1, note 1 above.
15. "Unity of pleasure and emptiness" is one of the three special methods of experiencing emptiness in the Vajrayana: through pleasure (*de*), clarity (*sal*), and nonconceptuality (*mitogpa*). For a succinct presentation by Longchenpa, see H. V. Guenther, *Kindly Bent to Ease Us: Part Two; Meditation* (Emeryville, Calif.: Dharma Press, 1976), 72–77.
16. *Bodhicitta* here refers to the energetic basis of orgasm. Because the subtle energies are rising to the crown of the head during this phase, one does not want to do anything that would draw them down.
17. "Secondary ingredient of such an objective support" refers to a sexual partner. This technical language here is very appropriate: sexual practice is only a special method of the Vajrayana, it is not essential and one has to "make oneself fit" for such a method by first training without a partner. One has to train in the breathing practices and visualizations related to the three energetic pathways and configurations, especially the ability to bring the energy from the left and right pathways into the central pathway.
18. The "path of passion" refers to the alchemical transmutation of sexual energy into pristine awareness. In terms of the Anuttarayoga Tantra this means that passionate attachment is transformed into the pristine discriminating awareness, mentioned below (see p. 31). In terms of Dzogchen, it is self-liberated as the creative energy of pristine awareness. If one does not know this, it is just attachment.
19. "Esoteric empowerment" (*wang*). Initiation is critical to esoteric

practice, because it transmits to the student a "taste" of the particular view that underlies the practice.

20. Here begins the general tantric description of all aspects of sexual activity in terms of the five phases and their corresponding buddha-forms. The forms here are imaged as female partners of their male counterparts. See, for example, David Snellgrove, *The Hevajra Tantra: A Critical Study* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 1:93.
21. The female polarities refer to the experience of the phases; the male polarities refer to the means of experience. For example, the nondual experience known as the mirrorlike pristine awareness (*melong tabu yeshe*), unites the means of experience, ordinary perception (*namshe*), with whatever appears to it as an object in space. The means and object of experience are symbolized by male and female buddhas. In the case of perception/space, they are Vairocana and Dhatvisvari in union. See *Matrix of Mystery*, p. 106.
22. Most tantric texts on sexual practice were written from a male perspective. Because of the different patterns of male and female arousal, there is more attention paid to drawing sexual energy upward. Sometimes this upward movement is even presented as a goal, an *opus contra naturam*, to prevent the creation of new life. See introduction.

    On the Taoist context, see Kristofer Schipper, *The Taoist Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 144–55. For a comparative East-West perspective see Charles Mopsik, "Union and Unity in Kabbalah," in *Between Jerusalem and Benares: Comparative Studies in Judaism and Hinduism*, ed. Hananya Goodman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 238–42; and "The Body of Engen-

derment in the Hebrew Bible, the Rabbinic Tradition, and the Kabbalah," in *Fragments for a History of the Human Body*, ed. Michel Feher, Ramona Naddaff, and Nadia Tazi (New York: Zone Books, 1989), 1:49.

23. Various numbers of *tigle* will be given in the text. In the simplest tantric analysis, there are two, the white and the red, found in the male and female channels, and in the body as semen (thought to be generated in the brain) and blood. A third is added that is related to the nondual central channel. The inner fire practice, for example, unites the rising, red, female fire with the descending, white, male water from the crown/brain. See *Clear Light*, chap. 3. For a survey of traditional ideas about sexual physiology, see Weston La Barre, *Muelos* (New York: Columbia University Press), 1984.

    In the Dzogchen Upadesha teachings, the number of *tigle* multiply according to the number of special channels discussed, usually four or six. See Daniel Scheidegger, "Different Sets of Light-Channels in the Instruction Series of Rdzogs chen," *Revue d'Etudes Tibetaines* 12 (March 2007): 33–36.
24. Such ideas about the gender of the fetus are found in many traditions. See Surendranath Dasgupta, *A History of Indian Philosophy* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1975), 2:302–319; and Frances Mary Garrett, *Religion, Medicine and the Human Embryo in Tibet* (London: Routledge, 2008), chap. 4.
25. The energy descends in the right, male channel. In tantric symbolism, the following associations are made:

    brain—white, water, male *tigle*, descent of energy
    uterus—red, fire, female *tigle*, ascent of energy

See chapter 2, notes 22 and 23 above.

26. At the navel, heart, throat, and crown.
27. "Common accomplishments" refers to paranormal powers, such as clairvoyance and clairaudience, most often categorized as the eight great *siddhis*. The "supreme accomplishment" is enlightenment itself.
28. This final section on how to prevent and treat illness through harmonizing the phases was particularly important on long retreats in isolated places.
29. The six contributory conditions (*kyen*) operate together with a motivating cause (*gyu*). In the case of illness, they are the three poisons and the three primary constituents mentioned in the next paragraph.
30. Three primary constituents (Sanskrit: *dosha*) of the human body in Ayurveda: wind, phlegm, and bile. Ayurveda is the basis of Tibetan medicine.
31. The five poisons are delusion, attachment, aversion, pride, and jealousy.
32. Here "stomach" refers to the stomach and related organs of digestion, such as the spleen. There is a similar approach in traditional Chinese medicine that sees the imbalance of the phases as rooted in the stomach/spleen. This is both because the stomach represents earth, which is the central element in the Chinese cosmological system, and because good digestion is regarded as the foundation of health. See *Web That Has No Weaver.*
33. See Chogyal Namkhais Norbu, *Yantra Yoga: The Tibetan Yoga of Movement* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 2008).

Chapter 3. The Meaning of *A Section of Hidden Instruction, the Innermost Essence of the Dakini*

1. Dzogchen is divided into three series of teachings: the Nature of Mind Series (*semde*), the Expanse of Space Series (*longde*), and the Hidden Instruction Series (*managde*). See Manjusrimitra, *Primordial Experience,* 144, n. 5.
2. On essence (*ngowo*), nature (*rangzhin*), and energy (*thugje*) as the metaphysics of Dzogchen, see the many presentations of Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche, such as *Dzogchen: The Self-Perfected State* (London: Arkana, 1989), 25–28. Guenther translates these three as "facticity," "actuality," and "responsiveness." *Ngowo* denotes that something is, *rangzhin* denotes what it is, and *thugje* denotes that it is always interactive.
3. The "*bardo* of existence" is the fourth *bardo* (intermediate state), in which the rebirth process is described. The other three are the states of living, dying, and *dharmata* (Sanskrit), the manifestation of the awakened state after death. For a concise presentation see Tsele Natsok Rangdrol, *The Mirror of Mindfulness: The Cycle of the Four Bardos* (Boston: Shambhala, 1989).
4. The two basic practices of the Upadesha are *tregcho* and *thogal.* In the *tregcho* one learns what may be called super-relaxation. One first has to relax into a level of experience in which the object of meditation and one's responses to it lose their power to disturb or distract. Then one can take this introductory experience into all aspects of life. In the super-relaxed state, often in the context of retreats in the dark, one

can begin to experience the manifestations of buddhahood mentioned in our text, directly through the senses. This is discussed in the *thogal* teachings. See H. V. Guenther, *Meditation Differently* (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992) and Shardza Tashi Gyaltsen, *Heart Drops of Dharmakaya* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 1993), 51–113.

CHAPTER 4. TRANSLATION OF *A Section of Hidden Instruction, the Innermost Essence of the Dakini*

1. *Blazing Lamp Tantra* (*sGron ma 'bar ba'i rgyud*) 3:304. This is one of the Seventeen Tantras of the Upadesha (Tibetan: *managde*) collection of Dzogchen. All the quotations in this section are to chapters and page numbers from this collection, *The Seventeen Nyingma Tantras (rNying ma'i rgyud bcu bdun)* (Thimphu, Bhutan: Drug Sherig Press, 1983). On the Seventeen Tantras, see *Poetic Thought*, chap. 3.
2. *Sun and Moon Tantra* (*Nyi ma dang zla ba kha sbyor ba chen po gsang ba'i rgyud*) 2:190.
3. *Garland of Pearls Tantra* (*Mu tig rin po che phreng ba'i rgyud*) 8:535.
4. *Tantra Without Letters* (*Yi ge med pa'i rgyud chen po)* 1:219.
5. *Penetrating the Essence of Sound Tantra* (*Rin po che 'byung bar byed pa sgra thal 'gyur chen po'i rgyud*) 3:152.
6. *Tantra of the Six Spheres* (*Kun tu bzang po klong drug pa'i rgyud*) 4:178.
7. *Sound Tantra* 1:84.
8. *Tantra of Self-Generating Pure Presence* (*Rig pa rang shar chen po'i rgyud*) 5:638.
9. Ibid., 50:40.

10. "Three dimensions of being": *trikaya,* usually translated as "three bodies." On my approach to translation and its relation to that of H. V. Guenther, see appendix 3.
11. *Radiant Sphere Tantra (Klong gsal nyima).* In a short preface to our text, Padmasambhava states that the *Radiant Sphere Tantra,* as explained in the tradition of Sri Singha, together with the Seventeen Tantras, forms the basis of his exposition (*Mkha' 'gro snying thig,* vol. 3, pt. 2, *Snying thig ya bzhi,* 34). The *Klong gsal,* whose full title is *Kun tu bzang mo klong gsal bar ba nyi ma'i rgyud,* is found as no. 446 in vol. 25 of the *sDe dGe* edition of the *rNying ma rgyud 'bum,* 361–82. It is sometimes included with the Seventeen Tantras, along with the *bKa' srung nag mo'i rgyud,* devoted to the protectress Ekajati; hence sometimes one refers to nineteen Upadesha tantras. See Tibetan & Himalayan Digital Library (www.thlib.org); appendix to *Mirror of Mindfulness;* and H. V. Guenther, *The Teachings of Padmasambhava* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 221.
12. *Garland of Pearls* 8:535.
13. This refers to the views of the ancient Indian philosophical systems. For example, in the Nyaya-Vaishesika system the atoms (Sanskrit: *paramanu*) that make up the elements (Sanskrit: *bhuta*) of earth, air, fire and water are eternal, as well as the partless element of space. In the Samkhya-Yoga system, *prakriti* (Sanskrit), the source of the physical world, is eternal although in constant transformation (Sanskrit: *parinama*). See M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1970), chaps. 10–11.
14. "Wind" (*lung,* motility) thus has two levels of meaning: as one of the phases, and here, at a deeper level, as pervading all the phases. In order to point to this deeper level, one can use

H. V. Guenther's translation of *lung* as "motility." "Motility" is "a biological term which refers to the ability to move spontaneously and actively, consuming energy in the process. It can apply to either single-celled or multicellular organisms." http:en/wikipedia.org/wiki/Motility.

15. "Appropriate structure" (Tibetan: *thab;* Sanskrit: *upaya*) and "intelligent functioning" (Tibetan: *sherab;* Sanskrit: *prajna*), usually translated "skillful means" (which is compassion) and "wisdom" (which is the understanding of emptiness), are the two principle elements of Buddhist paths (Sanskrit: *yana*s), from Hinayana (Sanskrit) to Atiyoga (Sanskrit). Their meaning shifts depending on the context.
16. On the five poisons, see chapter 3, note 31 above. The six aggregates are the five senses and the mind.
17. *Garland of Pearls* 5:473.
18. "Jaundicelike" refers to a lack of pure presence because one's experience is then colored by it, just as jaundice makes the body appear yellow.
19. The development of the fetus is discussed in the *Explanatory Tantra* of the Four Tantras of the Tibetan medical corpus (r*Gyud bzhi*). See *Religion, Medicine,* chap. 5.
20. The four directions are here arranged east, south, west, and north. Because the body is a mandala, this clockwise rotation, the traditional movement for circumambulating a mandala, is used.
21. This statement has relevance for contemporary debates on abortion in regard to the first trimester. Other traditions also mark certain stages. For example, in Jewish law, until forty days after conception the fertilized egg is considered as "mere fluid." See Fred Rosner, *Biomedical Ethics and Jewish Law* (New York: KTAV, 2001).

22. See chapter 4, note 11 above.
23. *Garland of Pearls* 4:452.
24. See chapter 2, note 13 above.
25. *Sound Tantra* 2: 126. *Kati shelbug* is a channel particular to the Dzogchen Upadesha that makes possible the visionary experiences such as the "*vajra*-chain" discussed below (chapter 4, note 40). On this and other channels particular to Dzogchen Upadesha, see Scheidegger, "Different Sets."
26. *Sound Tantra* 1:61.
27. Ibid., 1:62.
28. Ibid.
29. The three forms of pristine awareness of essence, nature, and energy of the Ground. See chapter 3, note 2 above. On different numbers of *tigle* see chapter 2, note 23 above.
30. Not found in *Pure Presence (Rig pa rang shar)* nor in the other sixteen Upadesha tantras.
31. On *ku* (Sanskrit: *kaya*) see chapter 4, note 10 above.
32. On the *Radiant Sphere Tantra (Klong gsal)*, see chapter 4, note 11 above.
33. The forty-two peaceful and fifty-eight wrathful deities manifest in the *bardo* of *dharmata* (Sanskrit). See chapter 4, note 20 above.
34. *Pure Presence* 2:527. On the four lamps, see *Meditation Differently* and Scheidegger, "Different Sets." They are also found in the Bonpo teaching of Dzogchen; see *Heart Drops*, 91–94.
35. Not found in *Pure Presence (Rig pa rang shar)* nor in the other sixteen Upadesha tantras.
36. *Sound Tantra* 3:146.
37. Not found in *Rig pa rang shar.*
38. Not found in *Rig pa rang shar.*

39. On the *Klong gsal,* see chapter 4, note 11 above.
40. *Sound Tantra* 4:177.
41. On the "*vajra*-chain" see chapter 4, note 24 above. The realization of the body as a buddha-mandala and experiences such as the "*vajra*-chain" are "not something relative." This presentation of Dzogchen creates difficulties for the Buddhist teaching of the "two truths," relative and absolute. In the sutra teachings, all phenomena are impermanent according to the relative truth and empty according to the absolute. The experiences of the chakras and channels in the tantras, which could not simply be categorized under relative truth as understood in the sutras, led Buddhist thinkers to create a category of "pure relative truth." See Kennard Lipman, "What is 'Buddhist Logic'?" in *Tibetan Buddhism: Reason and Revelation,* ed. Steven D. Goodman and Ronald M. Davidson (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 25–44. The teachings of our text do not even fit into this tantric way of thinking.
42. On the *Klong gsal,* see chapter 4, note 11 above.
43. The view of the sutras mentioned in chapter 4, note 41 above.
44. This refers to specific instructions on increasing the creative potency using a suitable partner, as found in chapter 2, p. 30.

Chapter 5. A Dzogchen Approach to Yoga

1. See chapter 3, note 2 above.
2. The term is Eugene Gendlin's; see Eugene Gendlin, *Focusing* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982). Gendlin's work remains an important means of exploring the similarities and differences between Western somatic psychologies and Asian meditative

methods. For example, Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche has always described the visualization method of the Anuyoga system of Nyingma tantras as "a Tantric method based on instantaneous, nongradual visualization" in which "elaborate gradual visualizations are not necessary. All that is therefore required in this method is the immediate presence of the dimension of the mandala, manifested in an instant." (*Dzogchen: The Self-Perfected State,* 22). The key point of difference, however, between the methods of Gendlin and related psychological schools and the methods of Asian meditative practices is that the former emphasizes personal meaning and its relationship to personal history.

3. Arthur Mindell, *Working with Yourself Alone* (Portland, Ore.: Lao Tse Press, 2001) and others; Julie Henderson, *The Lover Within: Opening to Energy in Sexual Practice* (Barrytown, N.Y.: Station Hill, 1999).
4. Part of secret breathing and the third of group of yantras. See *Yantra Yoga.*

Appendix 1. The Evolution of Our World: Buddhist Cosmology according to Longchenpa's *Wish-Fulfilling Treasure*

1. On the nine vehicles and this holistic view of Buddhist teachings, see H. V. Guenther, *From Reductionism to Creativity: rDzogs-chen and the New Sciences of Mind* (Boston & Shaftesbury: Shambhala, 1989).
2. The *Abhidharma-kosa* is a fifth-century compendium of Buddhist thought by Vasubandhu. The third chapter deals with cosmology. See Vasubandu, *Abhidharmakosabhasyam,* 4 vols., trans. Leo M. Pruden (Berkeley, Calif.: Asian Humanities Press, 1989).

3. *Wish-Fulfilling Treasure* (*Yid bzhin rinpoche'i mdzod kyi 'grel pa padma dkar po*), Gangtok, Sikkim: Dodrup Chen Rinpoche, n.d., 41–45.
4. *Ghanavyuha*. $1{,}000^3$ (1,000 × 1,000 × 1,000) such world systems are the field of activity of a *nirmanakaya* buddha such as Shakyamuni.
5. Each of the four epochs is made up of twenty interval epochs; thus one cosmic cycle or Great Epoch (*kalchen*) is equal to eighty smaller epochs.
6. These are the residences of the gods who do not have the earth phase as their basis. They reside in the region of the thirty-three gods at the summit of Mount Meru. See *Abhidharma-kosa* 3:69. This means that their environment, originating from above, consists more of the active energy of the phases than those who originate from below; that is, from the structive energy.
7. The "sutras of the ordinary pursuit" refers to the presentation summed up in the *Abhidharma-kosa;* the "extraordinary pursuit" refers to the presentation of the *Ghanavyuha* system sketched in appendix 1, note 4 above.
8. This statement clearly shows the nontheistic nature of Buddhist thought: the "cause," the motivating force for the origination of our world is the karma of previously existing sentient beings. The basic Indian Buddhist critique of a "creator" (Sanskrit: *ishvara*) is summed up in verse 2 of Santaraksita's *Madhyamakalamkara:*

   Since results are gradually produced, those entities that are said to be an eternal cause are not of a unitary nature. If results are each produced gradually by various causes, the eternality of these entities would be destroyed.

See *The Adornment of the Middle Way* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2005), 51.

9. That is, two *vajras* forming a cross, surrounded by a circle.
10. Estimates for a yojana vary between four and ten miles.

Appendix 2. On the Five Phases

1. Manfred Porkert, *The Theoretical Foundations of Chinese Medicine* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1974), 45.
2. For a summary introduction to Buddhist cosmology, see appendix 1.
3. Eric Jantsch, *Design for Evolution* (New York: Braziller, 1975), 37.

Appendix 3. H. V. Guenther's Approach to Translation

1. H. V. Guenther, *Philosophy and Psychology in the Abhidharma* (Berkeley, Calif. and London: Shambhala, 1976), 55.
2. H. V. Guenther, *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* (London: Rider and Co., 1959).
3. H. V. Guenther, *The Life and Teaching of Naropa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 119, n. 1.
4. H. V. Guenther, *Tibetan Buddhism in Western Perspective* (Berkeley, Calif.: Dharma Press, 1977).
5. H. V. Guenther, *The Royal Song of Saraha* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1969), 5.
6. H. V. Guenther, *Yuganaddha: The Tantric View of Life* (Banaras: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1952; reprinted 1969).

7. *Tantric View of Life*, 21.
8. Ibid., 45.
9. H. V. Guenther, *Kindly Bent to Ease Us: Part One; Mind* (Berkeley, Calif.: Dharma Publishing, 1976), 252.
10. Ibid., 111.
11. For a start, see the very perceptive remarks of A. H. Almaas in his *The Inner Journey Home* (Boston and London: Shambhala Publications, 2004), 689–90.
12. Kennard Lipman, preface to *Primordial Experience: An Introduction to rDzogs-chen Meditation*, by Manjusrimitra, trans. Namkhai Norbu and Kennard Lipman (Boston and London: Shambhala Publications, 2001), xvii–xxv.
13. Longchenpa, *You Are the Eyes of the World*, trans. Kennard Lipman and Merrill Peterson (Ithaca, N.Y.: Snow Lion, 2000).

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Dr. Lipman has written about Tibetan Yoga for *Yoga Journal* magazine and about the mind-body connection in *Advances: The Journal of Mind-Body Health*. His previous books, *Primordial Experience: An Introduction to rDzog-Chen Meditation* and *You Are the Eyes of the World*, were authored in collaboration with Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche.